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FIFTY GREAT ADVENTURES  
THAT THRILLED THE WORLD







THE RACE TO THE POLE



HERO OF POLAR ADVENTURE

*Captain R F Scott Though he failed to win the race to the South Pole, Scott is to the world the very personification of adventure*

# FIFTY GREAT ADVENTURES THAT THRILLED THE WORLD

*With Seventeen Gravure Illustrations*



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# AMBASSADOR TO KUBLAI KHAN

By  
DENIS CLARK

TOWARDS the end of the year A.D. 1295 certain notables of Venice, accustomed though they were to extreme variety in that half-way city where East rubbed shoulders with West, were shocked and a little alarmed to be accosted by three very peculiar men. Two were old and one was middle-aged, and each wore a most outlandish costume: a dressing-gown-like garment of faded, quilted silk. Two sported tall hats of fur, while the third had a kind of round cap with a button on top, such as never before had been seen in Venice. But for their rags they might have been taken for maskers. A strange brown dog with prick ears and a curly tail followed them on a chain.

"Ha, Signor Dandolo," called one of these foreigners to a stately gentleman who watched their parade down the street, "do you not know your old friend Nicolo?"

Andrea Dandolo, Captain-General of the Venetian galleys, drew himself up. He had absolutely no memory of having encountered this fantastic person before, and, in any case, the man's accent made it quite impossible that they should have been on terms of Christian names.

"No, sir," he answered briefly. "You behold a Venetian, not a citizen of whatever particular country is so fortunate as to be graced by you and your like."

He turned on his heel, one hand curling his fine moustache, while the other dropped down on his sword, so that its long silver sheath stuck up like a pheasant's tail. Was he not subject and trusted officer to the great Doge of Venice, "Lord of Three Eighths of the Roman Empire"? \*

"Look," said his friend Malpiero, "they are halting outside the Ca' Polo *palazzo*. Who can they be? There is some disturbance. See, all are coming to the windows and balconies. Now they have been allowed in. 'Tis strange for such fellows to gain an admittance there, and to claim acquaintance with *you*!"

Indeed, next day Venice was agog, for the rumour went round that these three foreigners were no less than the two brothers Polo:

\* The Doge's proudest title at that time

Maffeo and Nicolo, who, with Nicolo's son, had returned from astounding adventures. Some would believe it, but most would not. Rumour told that it had been a long time before they had gained recognition in their own house. Then came a further surprise. All noble Venice was asked to a great entertainment at Polo *palazzo* to meet the returned wanderers.

That banquet was one which provided several generations of Venetians with food for amazement. Those three who had alleged themselves to be the Polos, father, son, and uncle, performed a variety of astonishing and highly extravagant tricks. Four times during the feast did they leave the hall, each time to exchange their costly robes for others more rich and extraordinary; and on every occasion they had these fine garments of velvet, damask and brocade ruthlessly cut up and given away to the servants. The guests all gaped at these antics. They whispered among themselves that, although, admittedly, their hosts spoke with peculiar foreign accents, they did begin to recognize certain Polo features about them. But when the lackeys had gone, the youngest of the three did that which set its seal on the "Arabian Nights" character of the entertainment. From another room he brought in those stained and tattered garments which had won such suspicion and scorn from their one-time friends. One by one he ripped up their manifold seams and welts; and out tumbled sparkling piles of diamonds, rubies, pearls, carbuncles and emeralds. An emperor's ransom was there in precious stones. The guests sat back and gasped.

Yes, they were in truth the enterprising Polos, come back to Venice after such travels and adventures as no man had ever had before. Andrea Dandolo was quite convinced of it now, when he saw those dazzling heaps in ample proof. He rose from his seat and strode to Nicolo Polo, his old friend, whom he affectionately embraced

"And when the story got wind in Venice, straightway the whole city, gentle and simple, flocked to the house to embrace them, and to make much of them with every conceivable demonstration of affection and respect. On Messer Maffeo, who was the eldest, they conferred the honours of an office that was of great dignity in those days; while the young men came daily to visit and converse with the ever polite and gracious Messer Marco, and to ask him questions about Cathay and the great Can, all which he answered with such kindly courtesy that every man felt himself in a manner his debtor." \*

\* H. Yule's, *Ramusio's Marco Polo*

The story he had to tell was not set down until a few months later, when Messer Dandolo set out with his galleys to conquer the insolent Genoese. In the ensuing battle the Venetians were soundly defeated, so that Marco Polo, who had been given command of a ship, had plenty of time in prison to set out his travels on paper. And this he did, with the aid of a certain "honest hack" (Marco himself was no willing penman), by name Rustichello, of Pisa.

It seemed that in the year of our Lord 1260 the brothers Maffeo and Nicolo, were engaged in commerce in Constantinople. Nicolo was married and had two sons, the elder of whom, Marco, was at that date six years old. A trading venture carried the two senior Polos up into the Crimea, where they visited Sudak on the shores of the Black Sea. From there they travelled on to the court of a Tartar prince named Barka Khan, famed for his liberality and courtesy, to whom they presented all the jewels that they had brought with them. This was no more than a casting of bread on the waters, for, according to the charming custom of that time, the Khan immediately returned the compliment with a gift worth twice as much. So pleased were the brothers with the Khan, and he with them, that they stayed at his court for a year, when he suddenly became engaged in war with another, more powerful Khan and was defeated. By this mishap the brothers were quite cut off from their way of return, and forced willy-nilly to continue their journey eastwards.

This Barka Khan was a grandson of the tremendous Jenghis Khan, all-conquering leader of the Mongol hordes. Jenghis, who had mastered the whole of Asia from the China sea to the banks of the rushing Dnieper, had set his four sons over the four divisions of his empire. Barka, the ruler of the Volga steppes, was now defeated by Hulagu, another grandson whose portion had been all those countries which were included in the Levant. And in far-away Kai Ping Fu, not far from Peking, there sat on dead Jenghis's throne his direct successor, Kublai Khan, the Great Khakan, to whose court fate had decreed that the Polo brothers should now pursue their travels.

Leaving the friendly but unfortunate Tartar's court, the Polos journeyed across a great desert until they came to Bokhara in Persia. Bokhara was a fair and pleasant city enough, but here they found that, not only could they not go back, they could not go forward, either. Wherefore they stayed at Bokhara for three long years, at the end of which time came from the troubled west envoys of Hulagu on their way to the court of Kublai Khan. These envoys,

very astonished to find Europeans quartered so far from home, at once suggested that they should go on with them. Kublai Khan, it appeared, had never seen any Latins and very much wanted to. It seemed the only way of moving at all, so the two brothers complied.

After many months of travel, through countries whose perils and charms young Marco himself was to see, his father and uncle at last reached Kublai's court. They met with great welcome and honour. Kublai questioned them at length about the rulers and customs of Europe, its forms of justice and methods of battle. Most of all did he seem interested in their religion and in His Holiness the Pope. The truth was that the Khakan desired a religion for his empire, and one which now might moderate the restless ferocity of those hordes who had helped his grandfather win it.

At last, well convinced of the merits of Christianity, the Great Khan decided to send an ambassador to Rome with the Polo brothers, begging the Pope to send to his country not less than "an hundred men of learning thoroughly acquainted with the principles of the Christian religion, as well as with the seven sciences, and qualified to prove to the learned of his dominions, by just and fair argument, that the Faith professed by Christians is superior to, and founded upon more evident truth than any other." \* For their journey he gave them a tablet of gold, which instructed those of every country they must pass through to furnish them with all that they might require. The three ambassadors set out but had not gone far before the Tartar officer fell sick and had to be left behind. The brothers continued on, treated with great magnificence wherever they passed, and, after a journey of three years, arrived at Acre, where they learnt that the Pope to whom they were bound was dead. The Papal Legate informed them that they must wait now until another Pope had been elected. In the meantime they decided to visit their home in Venice, and there Nicolo discovered sadly that his wife, too, had died.

But the cardinals seemed unable to agree as to who should succeed the dead pontiff. Two years passed, and still the brothers waited, until at last they decided that good faith compelled them to make their way back to Cathay. They set out once more, undaunted by leaving their land and the wild, long journey ahead; and this time young Marco Polo went with them.

First they travelled back to Acre, where they obtained leave from the Legate to procure some oil from the lamp of the Holy Sepulchre to take to the Great Khan. This was easily granted

\* Marsden's *Marco Polo*

(the Holy places had not by then been closed to the Christians by Saracens), and the Legate also gave them letters to Kublai, explaining the failure of their mission. Who knows what tremendous effect on history the conversion of the Great Khan's empire might have had? As it was, after much delay, only two Dominican friars were despatched for China, and these lost heart and turned back. Kublai's interest turned from Roman Catholicism to Buddhism, and much of his territory came under the influence of the Tibetan lamas.

Scarcely had the three Venetians reached Layas, on the Gulf of Scanderoon, when news came that this very Legate at Acre had been elected Pope Gregory X, who desired them to come back to him at once. Thus in the end, after a false start, they began their journey, with an answer to show that, at least, they had fulfilled their mission; although, instead of a hundred, with them went only the two Dominicans. At Layas in Cilician Armenia the party was threatened by the invading Saracen army of Bundukdar. The Dominicans promptly deserted, but the three Polos went on, through Greater and Less Armenia, which were now subject to the Tartars. The nobles here, though valiant men of old, had fallen on days of degeneration: "They are poor creatures and good at nought, unless it be at boozing; they are great at that." Mount Ararat, still, reputedly, with Noah's Ark perched on top of it, stood in this country, and one might buy pieces of pitch from its timbers for amulets, though snow prevented any easy ascent.

Thence they passed through Georgia by the Caspian, where Alexander was said to have cut off certain cannibal tribes (including Gog and Magog) within a mountain barrier, by building a mighty tower, "the Iron Gate," in the only defile that pierced it. Then Arabian Mosul and Kurdistan (inhabited by an "evil generation, whose delight it is to plunder merchants") were crossed until they came to Baghdad which Hulagu had lately taken. Hulagu seems to have had a certain sense of the fitness of things, which might be well applied to England of today. When he had taken the city he found in the Caliph's tower an astounding collection of treasure.

"Why," Hulagu asked him, "didst thou collect so vast a treasure? And having it, when thou knewest I came to attack thee, why didst thou not use it, paying knights and soldiers to defend thy city?"

The Caliph had no answer to this, so Hulagu incontinently shut him up in his tower with his gold, telling him he should have no other thing to eat but what he had loved so greatly. The unlucky Caliph, who had not seen the equivalent necessity in his time of

"guns before butter," quickly declined, and "died like a dog" in four days on this diet. The Tartars' notorious delight in uncommon deaths for their foes seems very often to have been tempered by their own peculiar, twisted humour.

The travellers now crossed Iraq and entered Persia, land of the Three Magi and of the fire-worshippers. These two matters of interest were closely connected, for the reason the Persians worshipped fire was as follows: when the Magi presented their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh, the Christ-child gave them back a little box. They rode off, wondering what was in it, but when they had gone a good way curiosity overcame them and they opened the box. Inside was only a stone, intended to signify that their faith must be firm as a rock. Its meaning was lost on the Magi, who threw the stone into a well. Into that well straightway from heaven there descended a mighty fire, which greatly amazed them, so that they took of the fire and carried it home to be worshipped. So went the story then; and Parsees, Indian colonists from Persia, worship the sacred flames at the present day.

Through a land of great plains with mountains on either hand they travelled onward. Many birds and much game were here, and fine wild asses with reddish coats. They came to Kerman, and ascended thence a great mountain, bitter with cold, for seven days before they went down the escarpment, and in two days more had reached Camadî on the edge of more vast plains in a sultry region. Here grew abundance of excellent fruits, some of them strange though none the less delightful to young Marco. The sheep had tails so fat that they weighed up to thirty pounds, and the towns were walled in with high earthworks, for the country was greatly troubled by many *banditti*. These bandits, named Caraonas, had mysterious powers of making the whole land grow dark, under cover of which they would attack. Messer Marco himself narrowly escaped being caught by them, running hastily into a nearby village for shelter; but most of those who were with him were caught, some being sold and some put to death. These bandit tribes were Mongols, a leader of whom at that time penetrated and established himself in India. Their smoke-screen tactics are explained by the fact that these turbulent horsemen often took advantage of sandstorms for their whirlwind attacks. However, the travellers escaped them safely, and so came at last to Hormuz, at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

All this country had until recently been overshadowed by the unwelcome attentions of the notorious Old Man of the Mountains.

No sheikh or prince was safe from him, for his methods were both original and very effective. His enmity often meant death, not by war, but by quiet elimination of whoever opposed his wishes. He had perfected a truly remarkable system of personal warfare, from which every other consideration was excluded but the assassination of the offending chief. It was done thus: in his mountain stronghold of Alumat (the "Eagle's Nest") in northern Persia he had built himself a very strong fortress. Enclosed in the walls of this fortress, but quite shut off from general inhabitants and garrison, he had made a most glorious garden, exactly following out the description laid down by Mahommed of paradise. Lovely trees, flowers and fruit grew in this garden, ringing with song-birds; and little streams ran through its pleasant lawns, not with water only, but with wine or milk or honey. Marvellously ornamented pavilions stood under its trees, and about them sported numbers of damsels with beautiful faces and graceful limbs, accomplished in music and singing and every art that rejoices the heart of man. But a fortress guarded this garden from all the world. No one could enter there but he whom the Old Man permitted.

In the Old Man's court were a number of youths, all under twenty, and selected for their inclination to warfare. These he regaled with stories of Mahommed's paradise, until one day he would have a small number of among them drugged and, when they woke up, behold they found themselves there!

"And the ladies and damsels dallied with them to their hearts' content, so that they had what young men would have; and with their own good will they never would have quitted the place."\*

But the Old Man had other plans for them beside mere dalliance. One by one they were drugged once again and woke, finding themselves back in the castle. Then each would be taken, as required, before the Old Man, to whom they would bow, thinking he rivalled the prophet.

"Where have you come from?" the Old Man asked solemnly, in front of all his following.

"From paradise!" each young man exclaimed, going on to describe how marvellously it had fulfilled all his expectations. This, of course, made all those others, who had not so far been sent there, exceedingly anxious to go. Then the Old Man would wait until he saw the necessity of having some prince done away with, when he would tell one young man what to do, promising that when he came back his



angels should take him again to paradise. Moreover, he said: "If you are killed, my angels shall still bear thee thither." So the young men went out on their missions, firmly determined upon success, and the Old Man of the Mountains grew more and more powerful and dreaded.

But Hulagu put an end to him and his idyllic garden, even as he had done with Barka Khan and the Caliph of Baghdad. The fortress had fallen and the assassins been disbanded some sixteen years before Marco Polo passed through Persia. However, the direct descendant of the famous Ishmaelian Old Man still wins fame in the popular and law-abiding person of the Agha Khan today.

The Polos had intended continuing their journey from Hormuz by sea. But something (Marco Polo does not tell what) prevented them, so that they retraced their steps northward, passing through ancient Balkh and Sapurgan, where the boy was much taken with the excellent method of preparing and drying the melons of that country, which were "sweeter than honey." Their road grew rougher and rougher. There were many deserts, and lions roared about them at night. Balkh had been mercilessly treated by Jenghis Khan. Though it had yielded without resistance, its entire population was led out into the nearby plain, on the pretext of holding a census and there the Tartars massacred every one. The city, too, had then been razed to the ground. It was still in desolate ruins when Marco Polo passed through.

Fifteen days on was Talikan, where the people were mighty hunters, and drinkers, too; although they followed Mohammed, whose teaching forbids all wine-bibbing. But, Marco Polo explains, most backsliding Saracens evaded this stricture by *boiling* their wine, which in some way rendered it technically innocuous, though presumably it still withheld most of its alcohol content. These men wore long ropes round their scalps for headdress and clothed themselves in nothing else but the skins of the beasts they hunted. Next in their way came Badakhshan, famous for its fine rubies, whose king was descended from Darius' daughter and Alexander the Great. Also, the people told Messer Marco, until recently they had had their horses descended from Alexander's horse, Bucephalus, all of which had a particular mark on their foreheads. The king's uncle had kept them, until he had been executed for refusing to give the king any; upon which his widow had killed the whole herd in revenge.

They were passing now through highlands which lie close above India, and Marco briefly describes for our benefit the states of "Pashai" (probably Udyana) and "Keshimur." The Pashais are

"pestilent people and crafty," while those of Keshimur "are brown and lean, but the women, taking them as brunettes, are very beautiful." Thence they ascended the Panja or Upper Oxus to the great plateau of Pamir, "the Roof of the World," desolate and icy cold, where no European had ever been before them. Here, to their wonder, they found a great lake crowded with wildfowl (they were coming into the lands of the Buddhist lamas, where few wild things are harmed) and marvellous pasture; and here they saw horns of that great sheep which today is called *Ovis Poli*, after Marco Polo himself. The huge curled horns of this monster sheep are each nearly five feet long, measured over the curves. They were used by the shepherds for food bowls and for folds for their cattle at night. Wolves abounded up here. They preyed on the herds of wild sheep, so that the road was lined with great piles of the bones and horns of their prey, gathered together by travellers to mark its way under the snow. It was so cold that no birds flew, and the men's camp fire would neither burn brightly nor give much heat in the rarefied air. For forty days on they rode through a desolation where no green thing grew nor any man's house was seen.

Next they reached Kashgar, lying high up, below peaks and more snowclad peaks climbing away to the north. Marco Polo digresses on Samarkand (of the "golden road," the haven of Flecker's caravan), but he did not visit it then, though his father and uncle had done so. Then on to Yarkand, whose people were troubled by goitres, and Khotan, whence they came to Pima, where the custom was that if any man went on a journey his wife might marry again if he did not return to her by the twentieth day: an encouragement to polyandry, not uncommon in such lonely regions where women were few. They were now in the Great Khan's country. Soon they entered Lob, by the great lake of that name, where all men rested a week before beginning the crossing of the Great Gobi Desert.

The desert was "all composed of hills and valleys of sand." Food for a month for beasts and men must be taken by any who crossed it. Water was found there every few days' journey, but nothing else—no grass or any wild beasts, though as they rode day after day they could hear strange voices and music. Sometimes it seemed that a great cavalcade moved beside them, and drums seemed to fill the air with a deep, mystic rhythm. These sounds were said to be caused by goblins or spirits. If a man lagged behind they would very soon lead him astray. Travellers of days immemorial had told of these wonders, and Marco heard them himself. Fancy, the high thin air, and the desolation doubtless all played their part in the phenomena.

Thirty days on, over this desert of sand, they came to the city of Sachiu in the province of Tangut. Here were idolaters, Saracens and Nestorian Christians. The Great Khan had Christians, thus, not very far from his gates, but their form of religion had grown so debased that it had quite failed to impress him. The idolaters worshipped an image, which they swore ate the flesh of sheep that they set before it; though Marco, young as he was, would scarcely give credence to this! Also they kept for a very long time before burial the bodies of those who had died, setting a table before them and giving them food every day.

And now at long last, after nearly three years' travel, the travellers saw the Great Wall of China before them. Their next halting place, ten days on from Sachiu, lay in its very shadow, within its extreme north-western corner. This was a stronghold of Buddhism, where the people were ruled by a faith that was kindly and wise. So they went on, through fertile lands and through deserts where nought but the wild asses ran, until Karakorum stood in their way, a city three miles in compass.

Karakorum had been until lately the governing seat of the Great Khans. When the wild, nomad days of the "Golden Horde" were over, and whole kingdoms, denuded of their former population, had been divided among the four sons of Jenghis Khan, the Tartar Khakan's palace had been established at Karakorum. Rubruquis, a Christian monk who visited there, describes the Great Khan's state. his palace was

"... surrounded by brick walls. . . . Its southern side had three doors. Its central hall was like a church, and consisted of a nave and two aisles, separated by columns. Here the court sat on great occasions. In front of the throne was placed a silver tree, having at its base four lions, from whose mouths there spouted into four silver basins wine, kumiss, hydromel and terasine. At the top of the tree a silver angel sounded a trumpet when the reservoirs that supplied the four fountains wanted replenishing."\*

But all this glory had been moved to Kai Ping Fu near Peking, whither the travellers must continue their way to the Khakan's palace.

While they journey on through China, Marco Polo relates the manners and customs of the Tartar people. Some of his history is rather confused, as when he speaks of Prester John and his great war with Jenghis Khan. Prester John, the fabulous Christian monarch of

\* *Encyclopædia Britannica*

the East, was in the twelfth century reputed by some to have his empire "somewhere in Asia," while others took him to be the King of Abyssinia. In fact, the foe against whom Jenghis Khan fought his tremendous and victorious battle was a certain Aung Khan, a mighty and rival Khan to Jenghis. Marco tells of the funeral journey of many days to the Khingan Mountains, where the Tartar emperors were buried, and how all whom the cortège met on its way were put to the sword with the words: "*Go wait upon your Lord in the other world!*" And how, at the burial, many horses, slaves, young men, and beautiful maidens were slain, so as to be with their master in the next world. Herodotus has written of that lonely, terrible tomb of the Tartar rulers, with a guarding circle of young, dead warriors riding on slaughtered chargers around their emperor.

The Tartars dwelt in circular huts made of felt. They were most hardy, travelling always on horseback, living on flesh of all kinds and the milk of their mares. If a Tartar found himself without food, he would suck the blood of his horse. They drank *kumiz*—sour milk, kept in horse-hide jars until it fermented. Their method of warfare was curious, for all were mounted, and would gallop, wheeling and turning hither and thither before the confused enemy, at the same time showering arrows from their bows. They never came into direct action, for if their foe advanced they galloped off, still firing over their shoulders. Then suddenly they would swing round, re-form and charge once more. So, they won many victories.

Even at that date China and Chinese manners had absorbed many of the Tartars, changing their characteristics; while those who had penetrated westward and were governed by Hulagu had fallen under Moslem influence. The Tartars had their own virtues. They were moral and possessed a code of justice. One curious custom of theirs was: that if a young man belonging to one family died, and the girl belonging to another family died too, the two families would often "marry" their dead children, and thenceforth, through this new relationship, comfort and help one another.

As the Polos went farther east and south they found themselves coming among the true Chinese: "The people, who are Idolaters, are fat folks with little noses and black hair, and no beard, except a few hairs on the upper lip. The women, too, have very smooth and white skins, and in every respect are pretty creatures." They encountered wonderful pheasants, great as peacocks, and wild cattle, yaks, with long black hair and silky tails which were the emblem of royalty throughout India. They travelled down, often within sight of the Great Wall with its many towers, sliding like a vast dragon over hill

and dale, until they came, at the end of three years and a half since leaving Venice, to Xanadu, city of Kublai Khan.

In Xanadu did Kublai Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran,  
By caverns measureless to man,  
Down to a sunless sea \*

Round the huge palace a wall was built, enclosing several miles of game-filled forest. The Khakan kept his hunting falcons here, and often rode about himself with a hunting leopard on his horse's crupper, which he would send after game. In the forest's centre was a fine palace, built entirely of gilt bamboo for easy transport from one forest to another.

The Great Khan kept for his personal and family use a dairy herd of more than ten thousand pure white horses and mares. When these mares travelled across country, every one, even the greatest lord, must give them right of way. They were treated with very great honour. One tribe only were allowed the privilege of drinking milk from these mares, and they were the Oirad, who had assisted Jenghis in his victory over Aung Khan.

Fine weather was always assured at the Khakan's palace by the charms of certain magicians whom he kept there. These came chiefly from Tibet, land of black magic, as it was also of the pious lamaseries. They fed on the flesh of executed criminals when they could get it. They dwelt in vast hostels, and entertained the Great Khan at his feasts, having his wine cup brought to him without mortal handling and performing such famous feats as those of the growing mango tree and the Indian rope trick. Ibn Batuta, the famous Arabian traveller, who visited China not many years after Marco Polo, tells of seeing this much discussed trick performed in a palace courtyard. A rope was thrown up in the air, where it stood straight up, disappearing into the sky. The conjurer told his boy to climb, which he did, disappearing too. The conjurer called him several times, but, receiving no reply, seemed to fly into a temper and, gripping a knife in his teeth, went swarming up the rope after him. He climbed out of sight, but presently down from the sky came raining fragments of humanity: arms and legs and pieces of torso, until all the bits of the errant assistant lay scattered about on the ground. Down came the sorcerer again, all covered with blood. He saluted the Khan, assembled the pieces of body, gave them a kick, and, behold, the boy jumped to his feet, as healthy as ever!

\* Coleridge

"All this astonished me beyond measure [writes Ibn Batuta] and I had an attack of palpitation like that which overcame me once before in the presence of the Sultan of India, when he showed me something of the same kind. They gave me a cordial, however, which cured the attack. The Kazi Afkharruddin was next to me, and quoth he, 'Wallah! 'tis my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending; 'tis all hocus pocus!'"\*

As for the Great Khan himself, he was an imposing person with a complexion "white and red," eyes "black and fine," and a "becoming amount of flesh." He possessed four wives, but had other consolations, such as a hundred of the most lovely maidens every year from a certain tribe whose women were famed for their beauty. These damsels were placed in charge of a number of old ladies, who made the girls sleep with them "to ascertain if they have sweet breath (and do not snore), and are sound in all their limbs."

Those who were passed for duty were sent six at a time in three-day shifts to the Khakan, "to wait on him when he is in his chamber and when he is in his bed, to serve him in any way, and to be entirely at his orders."

For the first three months of each year the Great Khan lived in his palace in the capital of Cathay named Cambaluc (Peking). This palace was surrounded by four walls of one mile each; at every corner and midway down each wall were fortified towers in which were stored his war harness. Inside the outer wall was an inner, also with towers, and in the centre of all was the palace. The palace had no upper storey, but was itself raised several feet from the ground, with marble terraces round it. Its walls were high, covered with silver and gold, and designs of dragons, beasts, and birds. Six thousand people could dine in its banqueting hall. The roof was covered with finely glazed tiles of many brilliant colours, yellow, and green and blue, flashing and shining like crystal.

Peking itself was twenty-four miles round, with twelve gates with a palace over each gate. Twelve thousand mounted knights were kept by the Great Khan for his personal guard and state, three thousand of whom were always on duty about the palace. When the Great Khan held feasts, the treasure brought forth in gold cups, plates, and wine jars astounded all who observed it. His "barons" moved up and down the hall seeing his guests were well served, while two giants stood by each door to see that no one placed his foot on its threshold.

\* H. Yule's *Marco Polo*

If any one *did* commit this social offence, he was straightway stripped and not given back his clothes till he paid a forfeit. Or, if he did not care to be robbed of his robes, he was given a certain number of blows instead. When the Great Khan drank every one fell on their knees, whilst the musical instruments burst out playing. The most magnificent feast of all was, of course, held on Kublai's birthday. His nobles wore wonderful dresses with girdles of gold, and these dresses for every occasion were presented to them by the Great Khan thirteen times in the year. On New Year's Day, also, a feast was celebrated, when the Great Khan's elephants, five thousand in number, were paraded before him in state, together with vast herds of camels.

Now, when Marco Polo, his uncle and father arrived at Kai Ping Fu, Kublai greeted them with pleasure and honour, well pleased with the messages from the Pope (although they brought no friars) and with the oil from the Sepulchre.

"Who is this?" he asked when his eyes fell on Marco, who by now was a fine young man of about one and twenty.

"Sire," answered Nicolo Polo, "'tis my son and your liegeman."

"Welcome is he too," then quoth the Great Khan.

A splendid feast was celebrated in their honour, and there they stayed at Kublai's court. As the months passed, young Marco began to display wonderful ability in learning the customs and tongues of the Tartars. He could even write four of their languages. Also he seemed discreet and prudent, so that the Great Khan singled him out for notice and thought very highly of him. In order to test him he sent him out on a mission to a province six months' journey away.

Marco had noticed that, whenever the Khakan's envoys returned to the palace from different parts of the world, he would show far more interest in the places and peoples they had seen than in their success or failure on their mission. Kublai grew very impatient and disappointed when such ambassadors returned with no clear account of the wonders of those far countries to which he had sent them. Therefore young Marco Polo, who was no fool, set himself to pick up any interesting knowledge that was to be gathered in the places through which he passed, and with such he regaled his master on his return. Kublai Khan was delighted with the boy's observation, while those who stood round him remarked: "If this young man live, he will assuredly come to be a person of great worth and ability." So it came about that Marco Polo was sent on one important mission after another to the uttermost ends and beyond the Great Khan's empire, even as far as the many islands of the Indian seas and

the great state of India itself. In this way, not only did he obtain knowledge of remote and various places, but all the time he, together with his father and uncle, assembled riches. Seventeen years passed thus. The Venetians began to feel the call of their homeland. Several times they applied to the Khakan for leave to return, but he would not permit them to go. They felt a little anxious too, for, besides the long, hazardous journey, they feared that old Kublai might die, and knew not what would be their fate at his death.

Then fortune was kind to them. Arghun Khan of Persia, Kublai's great-nephew, lost his favourite wife, who had made him promise he would not replace her except by a Tartar lady of the noble tribe of Bayaut. Therefore he sent envoys to Kublai Khan, seeking for such a bride. Kublai Khan found him a damsel, one Kukachin, of no more than seventeen years. The overland journey back was made dangerous by war, so the returning envoys decided to travel by sea. Tartars were anything but a seafaring race. They begged the Venetians to accompany them and give them the benefit of their experience. Here was an opportunity for escape with their treasure from the court of the moribund Khan! This time the Polos' application was backed up strongly by that of the Persian ambassadors. Ultimately the old despot consented grudgingly, but then, the decision made, bestowed on them numerous gifts, and had every preparation made for their comfort at sea. Kublai entrusted the Polos with numerous messages of friendship to all the crowned heads of Europe, including the King of England. At last, after much customary Oriental delay, they set sail with the lady from the port of Chincheu at the beginning of 1292.

Thirteen vessels sailed, and after three months' sailing came to anchor off Sumatra. Here the passengers landed, to wait for some months, for favourable tides and winds. Marco Polo, by now an accomplished travel memorizer (even though the actual writing had to wait until he was put into prison), notes some interesting facts about this great island. In his lively fashion, he tells how the country consisted of eight kingdoms and eight crowned kings. Most of its inhabitants had been converted to Mohammedanism by Arab traders, who have sailed and settled in Eastern seas since immemorial times. The hill people (Bataks, from whom we derive the pretty craft of that name) were cannibals then, even as they are today. The country held wild elephants and numerous unicorns, says Marco Polo, which were, of course, Sumatran rhinoceros. Unicorns did not do any harm with their horn; indeed, they were gentle, and might be quite easily caught "in the lap of a virgin." But the dangerous thing,



that which had to be very carefully looked to when these beasts were enraged, was their tongue, which was "covered all over with long and strong prickles (and when savage with any one they crush him under their knees and then rasp him with their tongue)."

Sumatra, in addition to many real curiosities, had even at that early date a traffic in bogus souvenirs for tourists who came from Europe. Under pretence of selling them a real, stuffed pygmy man, they caught little monkeys, pulled out all their hair except their beards, dried them, stuffed them, and rubbed saffron into their skin. "But you see it is all a cheat," says Marco Polo, "for nowhere in India nor anywhere else in the world were there ever men so small as these pretended pygmies."

To keep off the cannibals, Marco Polo set the men from the ships, about two thousand, to dig trenches and set up barricades of timber at the place where they landed. These cannibals made it their habit to eat any prisoners taken in war, besides all those who died a natural death. Of these last, by custom, they would not leave a single particle unconsumed. Other oddities in this island included a tribe of men with tails. These, Marco Polo heard, dwelt in the state of Sumatra near Achin. He calls them "a kind of wild man," and, indeed, the native name "*orang utan*" does mean "jungle man."

By way of the remote Nicobars and Andamans, islands of dog-headed men, the junks sailed westward, huge lateen sails catching the north-east monsoon winds, until, calling several times at India, they came to their haven in Persia. They found Arghun Khan had died two years before. His prospective bride had no one to marry, until the dead man's nephew, Ghazan, son of the new ruling Khan, offered himself in his uncle's place. Arghun Khan had been a person of considerable presence, while Ghazan was not striking at all; but he was much younger than the deceased Khan, and a man of great valour and very numerous virtues. The little princess from Tartary did not have such a hard fate, yet she wept on leaving the three Venetians, of whom she had grown very fond.

So they went onward to Venice; and at Venice befell what was told at this story's beginning. Marco Polo's imprisonment was not long. Peace was declared between Venice and Genoa after but one year (long enough, however, for him to have his travels put down on paper), and he returned to his Venetian palace. There his great wealth and his stories of fabulous treasure in the far land of Cathay won him the nickname by which he was best known in Italy—that of *Marco Millions*.

# I SAW THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

*By*

SIR PETER CHALMERS-MITCHELL

"I AM beginning this chapter at Malaga in September, 1936. My house and its terraced garden and just below them a house and garden occupied by a lieutenant in the Spanish army, are tucked into the south face of a hill. The hill is a knob projecting nearly from the middle of a wide crescent of hills whose points are separated by the blue Mediterranean about half a mile away. To the right as I face the sea, a deep and steep gorge, from fifty to a hundred yards across, separates me from the Camino Nuevo, a highroad winding up the hill from the Caleta, a main street with tramways, running parallel with the sea, and on my left a narrower gorge separates me from the palm-lined avenue winding up to the mansion of the "Bs" a wealthy Spanish family. Nearer the sea, on the slopes of the east limb of the crescent, are the mansions and villas of the Limonar, the fashionable eastern suburb of Malaga. Behind the high western part of the crescent lies the main part of the town.

As I look up from my typewriter the garden seems more brilliant than ever before. Under the vivid light are a group of splendid zinnias which would make a feature in a London show; there are branching sunflowers twelve feet high, scarlet cannas and hibiscus, the pale long trumpets of datura, sky-blue convolvulus with blossoms three inches across, white convolvulus even larger, bushes of plumbago, roses of all colours. The heavy scent of jasmine fills the air, and down below are trees bent under their loads of green lemons, black figs or mahogany-coloured locust pods, and scarlet pomegranates stand out stiffly like gigantic haws. On the shady side of the house five of my guests, the grandmother, a Spanish widow, English born and seventy-six years old, the mother, Dona Mercedes, and three daughters of from sixteen to fourteen years old, are in deck chairs working and chatting. Beside me the "babies," little girls of six and four, in white bathing gowns, are splashing and gurgling in a marble fountain pond, just big enough to hold them. And fifty yards away on the edge of the Camino Nuevo there lies the huddled body of a stout young man, in a silken singlet, pyjama trousers and velvet slippers,

dragged from his concealment last night, brought here in a car, thrown out on the road and shot, and now lying surrounded by perhaps a dozen men, women and children, who, their curiosity satisfied, move off to be replaced by others. This morning at half-past five and at a quarter to seven there were air raids, bombs rattled our windows and shrapnel dropped near us from the defence guns. In the hospitals there are the dead and mutilated bodies of men, women and children. At noon some sixty prisoners were taken to the cemetery from the provincial prison, shot, and laid in rows in a trench, and now, less than two miles away, the trench is being filled in. It may be covering the body of Don Thomas, the husband of Dona Mercedes and the father of the girls, and it may be days yet before I contrive to get news of his fate from the prison.

We have found that an agitated day is often followed by a quiet evening. Presently we shall have tea sitting round my outdoor dining-table, and then the babies will have a donkey ride up and down the garden paths, after which they will go reluctantly and clamorously to bed. About eight-thirty the rest of us tidy, and at nine we have dinner, also in the open air: a cup of soup, an egg, or a small piece of fish, a spoonful of custard, white wine and water and biscuits. We have our routine family jokes over the selection of biscuits, and then we sit under the stars until after eleven. But our gaiety on quiet evenings and through the quiet days that sometimes come is a skin over fear. We know all the noises now, and what to do, as we are a well-regulated household. When a red-flagged or black-and-red-flagged car takes its armed passengers up the avenue to the B.s' house, I have to hurry across to see what is ado. If there is the sudden stoppage of a car in the Camino Nuevo followed by shouts, a splutter of shots and a final *coup de grâce*, we have to sit still and hope that it does not concern one of our friends. If it is the hum of an aeroplane, we can take no precautions against a bomb making a bull's eye on our flimsy house, but if we take reasonable shelter from stray shrapnel we can see what we will of the circling planes, and the shells bursting round them. Even old Maria, my cook housekeeper, who at first got under her mattress, now takes stealthy peeps at the sky! But day by day we hear rumours of the rebels getting closer for their final attack on Malaga, and we do not know what will happen when an enraged town goes mad, and have a very good idea of what will happen when the rebels, headed by Moors and still more savage young Fascist gentlemen, batter their way in. Certainly I do not

know where or if ever I shall finish this chapter. As a shelterer of "Rights," I am compromised here; as a passionate "Red," I am in no mood to make the Fascist salute.

The rebellion which became the present civil war began here on Saturday afternoon, July 18. I know now that it was a plot arranged by the Fascists, the army and the navy, with the support and connivance of the leading Monarchists, and with the sympathy and in most cases foreknowledge of the Church and of most of the "Rights." It had been arranged for a date in June, then postponed until a date in August, and then, after the assassination on July 13 of Carlo Sotelo, the Fascist-Monarchist who was to be the head, hurriedly fixed for July 18. All the "Rights" knew the "day," and many of them had arranged that their families, their money and often themselves should either have left Spain or be in a place from which they might make a hurried escape to safety if things went wrong. Proceedings were to begin by the army declaring a state of military law on Saturday afternoon or Sunday in all the leading towns from Tetuan in Morocco to Barcelona and Madrid.

Here in Malaga the outbreak took most of us by surprise. For some weeks the town had been uneasy. There had been transport strikes, strikes of farm workers, strikes of masons, strikes of shop assistants. But we had attributed these to the delay of the government in getting going with the measures which the victory of the Popular Front had made possible. Early in July I wished to make some arrangements for autumn, in particular whether or not to advise two delicate ladies to carry out or to postpone an autumn visit to my house. I wrote to my friend Ramon Sender, the author of *Seven Red Sundays*, and deep in the counsels of the more extreme "Left." He replied saying that certainly before long the army, the Fascists, the Monarchists and the Church would make a final and bloody effort to crush the people, but that he had taken a cottage in the high Somosierra for the autumn, and he invited me to lead the simple life there with him, his wife and his two babies. A week ago he was in the trenches defending Madrid; if still alive he is certainly leading the simple life.

On the Saturday afternoon (July 18) I had finished my writing for the day about four o'clock, and thought of going to a favourite little bay ten miles off to bathe. But it was hot; I was lazy; the gardener-chauffeur had the afternoon off, and I shied at the bother of taking the car out of the garage myself. It was a lucky laziness, for on my way back I should have plunged into the thick of the fighting and at least should have had my car turned over and

burned. But I settled in the garden with a novel, and suddenly, soon after five o'clock, was startled by heavy rifle firing apparently in Malaga. My neighbour, an army lieutenant, with others had led troops to the civil governor and had demanded the proclamation of martial law. The governor refused; the Guardia de Asaltos took the side of the people and a street fight began. The soldiers were beaten, the officers taken prisoners, and the governor ordered the Guardia Civil, a force which in other towns generally took the rebel side, to be confined to barracks. He allowed the workers' organizations—and indeed he could not have prevented it—to be armed. The rebels had failed in getting military law; they got mob law.

The details I only knew a few days later. But on that afternoon the firing gradually died down, and columns of smoke, turning into columns of fire as evening fell, rose high in the air over the hill separating me from west Malaga. After dinner I sat on the terrace until long after midnight and watched the flames, with tumult and occasional bursts of firing, creep along the sea front until between me and the sea some houses were blazing. There was nothing to be done except to go to bed, leaving clothing arranged so that I could dress in a hurry. Next morning the western and the southern sky were black with rolling clouds; houses were blazing in the Limonar in full view, and from time to time there were crashes as floors fell in and sent up a column of sparks. The fresh air reeked of smoke.

After coffee I went up to my garage, in quest of a little Union Jack which I had used during the transport strike, but failing to find it, crossed the Camino Nuevo and went to the chauffeur, whom I dragged reluctantly out to find the flag, after which he scampered back like a rabbit to his hole. Returning, I found Pepe, who is of sterner stuff, watering my roses and poinsettias, but with a message from the B.s. Almost at once Dona Mercedes and her oldest daughter came up my garden path. The mansions of their relatives in the Limonar were ablaze; it seemed as if their turn would come next. Could I give shelter if necessary? I showed them the accommodation, and then went part of the way back with them. Half an hour later I remembered the shop-strike and the deficiencies of my larder, and was hurrying down the garden to warn my guests to bring food with them should they come, when I met a procession straggling down the steep path from the B.s' house to the watercourse, across it, and up my garden path. First two maids with huge bundles, then three tall daughters, the two

babies, Dona Maria the grandmother, a nursery governess, Don Tomas and Dona Mercedes, each carrying what they could.

We chatted in the *sala* making acquaintance, as I did not know the family before, and then discussed how to stow away people for the night. My guests insisted that I should keep my own bedroom, dressing-room and bathroom opening off the *sala*. The three small rooms and bathroom upstairs were allotted to the babies and their nurse, and the grandmother. The three older girls were provided with mattresses, pillows, etc., on the carpet in the *sala*, and their mother with a sofa couch in the same room (an arrangement which lasted until September 8); a bed, rather like a large cradle, was made up for Don Tomas in my study. By some miraculous squeezing, my Maria and Lola found room for the new maids in the kitchen and servants' bedroom.

The remainder of the day and the evening were rather miserable. The flames came nearer and nearer, and from the afternoon till long after it was too dark to do anything but listen, old men, women and children, in an endless procession, hurried up the little lane by the foot of my garden towards the Camino Nuevo laden with spoil of all kinds, furniture under which they staggered, piles of clothing, books, any portable plunder. But we all slept well.

On the Monday morning, the stream of plunderers was still active, houses still smouldered and crashed, but there seemed to be no new fires, and the B's' house was still untouched. Flagged cars with armed men dashed up and down the road. About the middle of the morning one of these red-and-black-flagged cars went up the B.s' avenue and halted, bellowing at the inner entrance gates. Presently we heard the gates being opened and the car going up towards the house. I offered to cross to see what could be done. Not knowing the temper of the invaders, I took care to go a little way round, so that I could come straight up the avenue towards them instead of risking taking them by surprise. Two men, on guard at the gates, pointed revolvers at me. I waved in a more airy way than I felt, took out a cigarette, asked for a light, which they gave me at once, and then took cigarettes from me very amiably. Then we talked, my bad Spanish helping me, as they saw at once that I was not an armed Fascist. One of them walked up with me to the garage doors which they had broken open. Again the pointing of revolvers, but my companion clapped me on the shoulder and all was well. They had come for the cars. I said at once that I could not stop them, but would they leave the house alone? They agreed, and took off the cars, leaving a

notice on the gates that the cars had been taken and that the house was to be respected. It was my first introduction to these armed men, and I found then the success of the cigarette-light technique in breaking the ice!

Meantime my gatekeeper's cottage and the gardener's cottage had filled up with refugees, chiefly people from houses near those that had been burnt, and all friends or acquaintances of my servants. But among them came an uninvited priest in shirt and black trousers whom no one knew. In the evening when I went to see how they were all faring, everyone except the priest was most appreciative and grateful, but the priest grumbled to me about his food, and of his having had to sleep on the floor with a dentist. Next morning he had quite outstayed his welcome and a deputation of the other refugees came to me to ask that I should tell him to go, as he was a compromise and a discomfort to everyone. Afterwards I heard from one of the 500 odd prisoners that amongst them were sixty priests who did nothing except rave and grumble, except one young Jesuit, certainly in the gravest danger, who spent all his time consoling and encouraging the lay prisoners. Through him, also, I received farewell letters from a number of rebel officers before they were tried and shot, to be sent on when it might be possible.

After a quiet night, there seemed nothing new on Tuesday morning. Soon after 9 a.m., Don Tomas and I went across to his house and phoned some wires to London and elsewhere. On the way back we were stopped by an armed gang not in uniform who searched Don Tomas for weapons, but quite civilly, and refused to search me as being English. Later in the morning another gang came to search the house, which they did rather casually, but with extreme care to see that either Don Tomas or I was watching when each cupboard or drawer was opened. They had bitter experience of the police methods of "planting" evidence in houses they were searching, and they, like all subsequent searchers, were anxious for us to recognize that their work was being honestly done.

After luncheon, things seemed quieter except for cars dashing about, and I went down to the consul's house in quest of news. But there was no answer to my ringing and I went on to the main Caleta road. There were no trams or buses, and so I held up a car already full of armed men and asked to be taken into Malaga. At once they made room for me, two of the men climbing on to the roof. They were in high spirits, told me that all was over, and that I might go about as I pleased in complete safety. At the

consulate I found little news; Clissold, the acting consul, was already deeply engaged with British subjects demanding immediate protection for themselves and their property! Let me record that all through the troubles Clissold behaved with valour, discretion and resource, and showed a marvellous patience over the impossible requests or even demands which were made. Then I wandered round the town, one of many spectators of the burnt houses, spectators curious and even a little sad at seeing the devastation. But the atmosphere was one of relief, even of gaiety. The trams began to run; shops were opening; a friendly "Salud!" was more than a sufficient password for the armed men and women in groups of three and four, and for the more orderly patrols that were in existence. Any one who was not a furtive armed Fascist was in friendly safety. The civil governor drove in an open car through the town, being cheered everywhere, and making romantic speeches about the "new Spain that was to arise from the ashes." The rebellion had been put down; the rebels had had their lesson, and all was well. None of the perversions of fact that have left Spain was more fantastic than that "Malaga was in the hands of the Communists." All was quiet that night and on Wednesday morning, but early in the afternoon another search party arrived at the B.s' house. Don Tomas and I went across, and sent back the porter for Dona Mercedes and the keys, whilst we sat on the steps of the lodge chatting with the armed group, one of whom was very proud of an English magazine revolver. The search over, we parted excellent friends, and by six in the afternoon things seemed so quiet that the B.s returned to their house.

But things were not quiet. The town had discovered that the outbreak in Malaga had been part of a scheme for Spanish Morocco and all Spain, and that in many towns the rebellion had been successful, with a consequent slaughter of members of the various proletarian committees. From that day through all the tense following weeks, as the war swayed, as aeroplanes began to be used, as Queipo de Llano belched out from the Seville radio his jeers and threats, the temper of the town rose. Our troubles began early on the Thursday morning. About six o'clock Maria knocked at my door, rather in a twitter, saying that some men had come in a car to search my house but that they would wait until I got up. I found the usual group of five or six young men armed with rifles and revolvers, and asked Maria to take them upstairs, after which they came to my study, casually opened a drawer or two in my desk, passed through the *sala* to my bedroom, and were satisfied.



They had been up all night and were tired; I gave them coffee, biscuits and cigarettes, and told them that they had no business to search an English house. They agreed and at once got busy putting my small Union Jack in a more conspicuous place over the gate. Then we shook hands. But before long they came back and went next door to the house of my neighbour, the lieutenant who had led the troops demanding marital law. The leader hurried up my steps: "The *teniente* is in jail, his family has gone, and there is only the wife of his servant; please come with us." I was sorry that I accepted, for within a few minutes, in addition to revolvers which might have been an army man's "spares," four hand-grenades were found under some shirts. The chief looked at me, and said, "Very serious!" "Yes," I said, "but I am not going to mix myself up in this." "Claro!" he replied, and went to the telephone and then called his men out into the garden. In about twenty minutes another car with uniformed men and a lorry arrived. The leader got out, came up to me, shook hands and said, "This is our job, good-bye," the "good-bye" in English with a grin. They were over an hour in the house, and I heard much hammering and wrenching of planks, and the noise of things being thrown into the lorry. In about an hour they went off, leaving a guard.

Meantime I had shaved and dressed and was typing in my study when I heard shouting and general clamour over at the B.s' house. I hurried across and found an excited crowd, armed men, women with revolvers, odd women, and a few *asaltos* in the courtyard and entrance hall. They told me that a machine-gun had been found in the house. I said "Nonsense," and tried to push through to the inner hall where I could just see the grandmother and the five girls sitting in a sad row on two couches. I went up to the *asalto* in charge who seemed anxious lest the crowd should get out of hand. He ordered me to be searched, to which I agreed smiling, and then let me pass through. Of course there was no machine-gun, but there was a large royalist flag and a sporting rifle (registered, but foolishly hidden in a linen-drawer). Don Tomas and Dona Mercedes, collected, but frightened, were standing in the middle of an excited, gesticulating group.

Before long the situation cleared. Some servants, led by a woman who had been employed two days a week for ironing, and who was a bitter Communist, had made the machine-gun accusation, which had fallen down. Two or three of the men who had searched my house before breakfast recognized me and came

AMBASSADOR TO KUBLAI KHAN



UNKNOWN AT THEIR OWN HOUSE

*Marco Polo, his father and his uncle returning to their native city of Venice from incredible adventures in China and Tartary are refused admission to their own house*

I SAW THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR



THE WAR IN MALAGA

*(Top) A mixed band of militia marching through Malaga against General Franco's forces. (Bottom) A Red mob in Malaga attacking a building.*

out of the crowd to help me. Parleys. The royalist flag and the sporting gun were bad; Don Tomas must be taken to the civil governor's for examination, but a guard would be put on the house, and the two ladies and the five girls might go to my house peaceably; indeed, as it was a rough walk, they would drive them round, a suggestion at which the old lady nearly fainted. But Dona Mercedes insisted on going with her husband, and off they went in a flagged car followed by two others and a disappointed crowd, leaving the old lady and the five girls in my charge. We got their packages together, the guards helping, and back we went with the two maids, down the steep path and up my garden, a melancholy procession.

My guests were afraid to be left, I was afraid to leave them, and I had no idea what I could do. And so I made them settle in, and then we sat in the garden until lunch. But just as we were sitting down a friendly neighbour came to call me to her telephone (I had been unable to get mine installed). Dona Mercedes was at the British consulate; her husband had been taken to jail and would I come for her? The streets were turbulent and not pleasant for a *senora*. There were no taxis, and although I offered to stop a flagged car, the lady would have preferred a tumbril. And so we came back by a hot walk and a crowded tram. In the afternoon I went to the Gobierno Civil, the entrance and stairs of which were thronged with excited sets of armed men, and after patience, expostulation and many cigarettes, got through the governor's ante-rooms and found the governor's secretary with a revolver at his belt, from whom I got an assurance that visiting hours were from ten to twelve and that we could take linen, cigarettes and food to the prisoners. Next morning I went to Malaga with Dona Mercedes, taking bandages (as her husband had an oozing surgical fistula in his chest), linen and chocolate. We had a most unpleasant walk from the outskirts of the town through a rough suburb to the new jail. We were not allowed to see him, and only a long argument with the prison superintendent enabled us to get our parcel through and a note back. Late in the afternoon we sent another parcel by the B.s' chauffeur, himself a Communist, but he was stopped by a picket, and the parcel taken from him on the grounds that the contents would be more useful to some wounded soldier. Next morning I went alone to the prison, and after one or two difficult episodes got the bandages in and a note out.

Sunday, July 26, was a quiet day, but early on Monday morning

an enemy aeroplane circled over the town, dropped bombs and killed some civilians. We heard next day that immediately after the raid a number of prisoners were taken from the jail to the cemetery and shot. Knowing nothing of that, I went towards the prison about four o'clock, with bandages, food and a note. The atmosphere of the suburb was hostile, but as I had set out in a rather shabby pair of linen trousers, string-soled shoes, a collarless shirt and no hat, I got close to the prison with nothing worse than ugly glances. But some hundred yards from it I was stopped by an armed patrol, completely unfriendly. I explained that, in accordance with the governor's orders, I was taking food and bandages to a prisoner, and opened the parcel. That only made them angrier. "Well," I said, "keep the parcel until I go to the prison and ask if it is not allowed," and made as if to go. At once I was covered by two revolvers and a rifle: "A single step and we shoot!" Then they stopped a covered lorry and there was a babble of quick Andaluz which I could not follow. I was "invited" to go into the front seat between the revolver-armed driver and a man with a rifle; two of the patrol got in behind and off we drove. But to my strong distaste the van swung off the Malaga road and took the cemetery road. Just before the gates, however, the van turned again and stopped at two small houses, but only to deliver some parcels, of food as it seemed to me. I brightened up, took out my cigarette case, asked for a light and exchanged cigarettes. The shades were lifting, and although as we rattled towards Malaga the noise was too great to talk, I was recovering confidence. In Malaga the van turned into a great dark shed, thronged with armed men and crowds of women. We got out and, one of my escort in front, one behind, we twisted and pushed our way to an outside staircase which led to a kind of rabbit warren looking like a huge, dilapidated board-school. We came to a small ante-room where I was left while my escort went in quest of the emergency committee. I chatted for a few minutes to the little group in the room, telling them of my troubles. They advised me to wear an English badge when I went about the streets, taught me the various salutes, and abounded in praise of England, the democratic country. I told them not to deceive themselves, that the Conservative party would not stir a finger to help the Spanish government, that the Labour leaders would concur, probably with some hypocritical expressions of regret, that the newspaper magnates would be openly or covertly on the side of the rebels, that the papers would be flooded with all the old stories

of priests being crucified, nuns raped, and orphans deliberately blinded, that they could expect only a barren sympathy from some intellectual highbrows, but money and practical sympathy from some of the poorest of the poor. They would not believe me, but my prophecy turned out almost exactly correct.

However, in a few minutes one of them took me to the committee, whispered a few words, got a smile and a nod in reply. I was marched through the town, an armed man alongside me, two in front and two behind, amidst stares and averted glances from tradesmen I knew, too afraid even to show pity, to the Gobierno Civil, through whose crowded corridors we went as a knife through cheese. In a few minutes we were out in the street again with the promise that a phone message had been sent to the prison. They asked me rather shyly if I would pay for a cab, and we tumbled into a four-wheeler. One of them gave the driver the order, "To the jail!" and I shouted, "There and back, a return trip," a joke much to their taste. Still more to their taste when on reaching the city slaughterhouse, on the turning before the prison entrance, I leant out of the window and shouted to the driver to go straight on. And so we reached the prison, roaring with laughter, got in the parcel, got out a note, and on the way back stopped in the most dismal and crowded little bar I have ever seen, and pledged each other and the crowd in Palma wine. Then we drove into town, and we parted at the tram, the best of friends! But certainly I suffered that evening from nervous exhaustion.

It would be tedious to follow my diary day by day through the interwoven events of many anxious and weary weeks. At first prisoners, although strictly secluded, were well treated, and even when fugitives were caught or persons arrested after the discovery of compromising matter in their houses, they were taken first to the Gobierno Civil and interrogated, and then released or taken to prison. But as the air raids on the town increased, often killing and wounding civilian men, women and children, and as the news of the wholesale shootings by the rebels of persons in towns they captured, came through, reprisals increased. "Rights" and Fascists caught were often taken not to the Gobierno Civil, but for a *paseito*, the Spanish word which came into use for the American gangster phrase, "being taken for a ride." Unfortunately the Camino Nuevo, well in sight of my garden, was often selected for these murders, sometimes in the afternoon, more often by night. After a bad air raid so many prisoners were taken from jail, either direct to the cemetery, or to the courtyard, and shot.

There was a typical example of grim Spanish humour over the shooting of prisoners. An enemy aeroplane was called "Jesus el Rico," from an image of that name carried in the Easter processions which when it came to the prison caused the release of a prisoner. Incidentally I must record that, as I heard many stories of mutilations and torturings, I made a point of going to see the bodies (left at the side of the road for many hours) of persons that had been shot. There was no case of mutilation before or after death.

Our second air raid was on July 28, directed against the harbour. On July 29 another was directed apparently against the aerodrome at Churriana. There were two on August 4 at 5 a.m. and 11 a.m., a heavy one at 5.30 a.m. on the 6th, another on the 7th, and on the 9th very heavy bombs fell in the direction of the harbour, but close enough to make my house shake and bring down plaster from the ceilings. The attack on the harbour was repeated at 5.15 and 6.45 a.m. on the 13th, and the Spanish man-of-war *Jaime I* was hit, but was able to go on its own steam to Cartagena whence it returned, patched up, in a few days. On the 14th another raid shook down plaster from my ceilings and killed people in the town. On the 22nd I was sitting in the garden just after breakfast talking to the Mexican consul, who thought I could help him in getting an official seal to a document only superficially in order. A sudden raid came, and in a few minutes a huge explosion was followed by a mountain of black smoke and flame rising from Malaga. We rushed up the hill and saw that "Campsa," the heavy oil and petrol central stores by the port, was on fire. We lay down flat for half an hour, expecting at any moment the petrol reservoirs to explode, and half the town to be blown up. By a miracle of dangerous labour the petrol was saved, and much of the heavy oil run into the sea, but for three days the Campsa smoked by day and glowed by night like a volcano. On the 28th there was a heavy raid about midday on the port, whilst I was in the street opposite the harbour entrance. Not at all pleasant. On August 30 a raid killed many people in the poor quarter near the station, and on August 31, full moon, there were raids at 9.30 p.m., 10.30 p.m., 11 p.m., and at 2.30 a.m. next morning, the worst of the lot, all four shaking my house and bringing down plaster.

On September 8, soon after lunch, a gigantic bomb was dropped on the eastern slope opposite me, but a little nearer the sea. My study windows were broken and nasty pieces of metal were found in

the garden next morning. On the 21st there was an unpleasant raid early in the morning but nothing fell very close to me. On the 24th, just after lunch, we had our worst experience so far. Four large bombs crashed within sight, each throwing up masses of smoke and soil, one, the nearest, shaking my house as a terrier shakes a rat, breaking more windows and throwing out the tiles in the bathroom upstairs.

My servants had hysterics and it was all Dona Mercedes and I could do to soothe them. When it was over and I was alone with sweet old Maria, my cook housekeeper, I told her that it was bad enough for us, but that Dona Mercedes and Don Tomas had the extra fear of being shot after any raid. Her eyes flared. "And they do well to be frightened," she almost hissed out, "for they are the criminals who have brought this misery on Spain." And so the temper of the people rose. On the 26th we had another bad raid about 9 p.m., one of the bombs wrecking houses in the Calle Victoria, round the corner of the hill from me. Among them was the German consulate, but we heard that the German consul, as usual when there was a hint of trouble coming, had gone on board a German gunboat, and so escaped, rather to the sorrow of the people. Up to this morning, September 28, there has not been another raid. But Malaga, crowded with badly-housed refugees, is frightened; some culverts and some caves near me are filled with a miserable crowd of women, children and old men, by day and by night.

The importance of the raids to me was that it increased the difficulties and the danger of communication with our prisoner. I became an adept in getting access to the civil governor, but, as his secretary frankly told me, an official order from the governor had no authority over the patrols. I found the proletarian committees, especially the Committee de Enlace, a joint committee of the Left organizations, the committee of public safety, and above all the Anarchist and Syndicalist joint organizations (F.A.I., C.N.T.) extremely kind and sympathetic, although they were the group most feared in the town. During this month I have been in close contact with them over the transformation of the B.s' house into a military hospital, and came to have a passionate admiration for the idealistic purity of their motives, their constructive schemes for the new order of society, their power of work and their audacious bravery. And every one of them knew that if the rebels triumphed they would have to shoot themselves or be shot.

Especially after an air raid and the shooting of prisoners, it was



often days before I could get news as to whether Don Tomas was still alive. For about a fortnight a surgical dresser who was allowed to the prison professionally helped us at great risk to himself, but he, poor lad, was killed by one of the bombs which fell near the port, and for the most part I had to manage as best I could, largely by bluffing. But I got rather urgent warnings from more than one of my armed friends that I was making myself a little conspicuous. A brain-wave came. Dona Maria, the grandmother, was English by birth; I got a certificate from Clissold, the acting consul, who (although oppressed by demands from outside for information about individuals, harassed by British subjects who wished to get away with all their baggage and expected him to arrange their passes, provide a warship and collect them personally from their houses) was unwearied in efficient kindness, saying that the lady had resumed her nationality. Next I wrote a letter to the governor from Dona Maria saying that she, a British subject, was anxious about the health of her son-in-law who required regular surgical treatment for his chest, and could she send in a doctor to see him? Clissold enclosed the letter in a personal note to the governor, armed with which I got an interview during which the governor himself telephoned to the prison (we had had no news for three days) and gave the necessary permission. The doctor gave an excellent report, on the strength of which, after another interview, we got Don Tomas removed from prison to a small hospital near my house. He was watched by two armed guards, and most of the patients were wounded soldiers still with their revolvers. But we could visit him as much as we pleased, take him all that he needed, and before long he had made friends with several of the wounded men. Things were much better, but very naturally after his long time in prison, during which very often friends of his were taken out to be shot, his nerves had gone, and now and again, especially when persons dying or badly wounded from a raid were brought into the hospital, he broke down completely, and once or twice made his very brave wife break down. They were almost inclined to think that if I pushed the consul hard enough I could get them out of Spain. Bribery I would have nothing to do with; if for no other reason than that people who take bribes cannot be trusted, and I heard of cases where large bribes had been paid and the persons had been shot on their way to the port. But as I became more intimate with the Anarcho-Syndicalist group, I got first what amounted to an absolute guarantee for his personal safety so long as there was any order in the town, and eventually a very

great hope for a pass out of Spain for Don Tomas and Dona Mercedes. But we had bad luck; on two occasions, just when the pass was going to be sealed, a very bad air raid took place, and it was entirely beyond the power of even the most influential and most feared people in the town to have the pass sealed, or even if sealed, to get the people safely on board the British launch. But I have been promised permission to bring Don Tomas to my house, so that he and his wife may live safely except for the risk of bombs we all run, and the risk of the town going mad, if the rebels come to attack it.

Since the outbreak, the British Admiralty has had a warship stationed here practically all the time, and rather more often than once a week it was possible for British subjects and other foreigners provided with exeunt passes to be taken to Gibraltar. As the danger became greater, the acting consul called meetings at the British Club, and, reinforced by official statements made by the captains of the ships and by one or two of us, all British subjects were urged, almost ordered, to take the first opportunity of leaving Malaga. My guests would not hear of being divided, but about the third week of August I said that we must get passes for Dona Maria and if possible for the five girls who, although Spanish, were not of age. With a good deal of difficulty I got the governor's secretary to type out the order, but he insisted that he could not have it sealed unless I first got the seal of the Committee de Enlace. That was easy, and was done. But as things seemed a little quieter, and especially as Don Thomas was in the hospital where his children could visit him, we put off their departure until September 8. Then, when we were actually down on the quay, waiting to go into the British launch, the police official, who was in an unpleasant mood, refused to pass Dona Maria, saying that her change of nationality was not valid. Neither Clissold nor I could move him. I rushed round to the Gobierno Civil, forced my way in through the guards, and got the secretary to phone to the docks saying that the pass was valid. Then back to the quay; official still obstinate. I hurried to the Committee de Enlace, showed them their seal on the original pass and told them that the dock police were refusing to recognize their authority. Quickly they typed, signed, and sealed a new order, and gave me a note telling the governor to countersign at once, which he did, and all was well.

Looking through my diary (this is the 74th day of the troubles) I find it occupied by an amazing number of things, some trivial,

some anxious, but leaving me less than no time to brood. Most tiresome were the various searches of the B.s' house, an enormous mansion, full of desks and cupboards, which would have taken a week to search efficiently. After the first two or three searches, chiefly in quest of hidden persons or arms, we gradually brought to my house prohibited books (by the various army, Fascist and Monarchist propagandists), signed royal portraits, royalist badges, vestments, altar furniture, in case a search group with an objection to Catholicism should come. Other more suspicious objects I brought away and threw into the bottom of an old well in my garden. But nothing seemed to exhaust the numbers of objects which, although innocent in themselves, were at least compromising. Finally, there was a search during which I was really frightened, as a knuckle-duster and a steel whip said to be Fascist were discovered, and it was only by some miracle which I don't quite understand myself that I was able to avert the crisis. Next day I insisted on making a search myself of all Don Tomas's private papers and removed an armful of what might have been compromising. But these troubles came to an end when the F.A.I., C.N.T. took over the house as a hospital, and assisted us in storing everything not required in the chapel and one or two other locked rooms.

An even more constant source of trouble came from the many indoor and outdoor servants of the B.s. I have no doubt but that the B.s were good employers as employers go in Spain, but it was symptomatic of the Spanish upper class tradition that not a single one of these servants could be counted on for loyalty to their masters and mistresses, and most of them were actively disloyal. They came singly or in twos and threes, often supported by an armed friend, making claims that were sometimes just, sometimes preposterous. I had to be present at the interviews, and sometimes had to go to see the committees myself. More recently another trouble has arisen. A sister-in-law and her husband, soon after the February elections, had tried to go to Gibraltar taking with them a large number of valuables. They were caught; he was imprisoned for a time and was mulcted in a very large sum, but appealed, as there was a legal point as to whether the smuggled documents were negotiable securities. I fear, however, that they were both deeply implicated in the rebel plot, and in due course both were imprisoned. By some important private influence the lady was rescued from prison and a little later escaped to Gibraltar, giving her servants the impression that she was going only to an

English friend at Torre Molinos, a few miles from Malaga. Unfortunately she had made no provision for her servants, who were left in this hungry town without wages, food or house. They came yesterday to see Dona Mercedes, demanding under open threats the address of their mistress, and as it is a serious matter to be in touch or supposed touch with persons in hiding, I fear trouble and certainly more obstacles to another scheme I am building up, with little hope of success, for the honourable release of my two friends.

But there are odd things about the war. Although food is difficult, I was able to buy fresh pastries for the girls nearly every day. I had no difficulty in getting my typewriter machine adjusted after the babies had tried to play a duet on it, although it just missed a bomb on the way back. My suits go to be dry-cleaned and come back punctually, and my white collars are dressed at the usual laundry. Most surprising of all, when my water supply failed and it became necessary to sink my well a further sixteen feet through hard rock, I was able to buy dynamite cartridges and to send off a charge twice a day, although every household in the valley must have jumped at the explosions! And my garden never has been more beautiful! A "Jardin des Supplices" filled with colour, scent and fear.

It is now the last day of September and full moon. There was a new alarm yesterday morning, although by good luck it did not reach me. The Admiralty at Gibraltar wirelessly to the commander of H.M.S. *Arrow* to say that a rebel warship had passed eastwards through the Straits and might be expected at Malaga about 9 a.m. to bombard the town. The commander of the *Arrow* sent an urgent message to the consul, who by telephone, taxi, etc., collected the eight or nine remaining British subjects, a French consul, one or two French subjects, a Swede and one or two Americans, at a house not far from me, the idea being that a dash might be made to the beach where boats from the British ship might pick them up, if the bombardment were serious. As I was fairly near, he did not propose to "collect" me until the last moment; and there was just a chance that in the confusion I might be able to pick up Don Tomas from the hospital on the way. But after two hours' waiting, another message reached him that the ship had gone elsewhere. It seems that most of last night the town was expecting bombardment, and this morning the rumours were stronger. But there have been many rumours.

I hope to send this to England tomorrow, H.M.S. *Arrow* taking

it and most of the remaining British subjects to Gibraltar. Notwithstanding the grim deeds that have been done, I am sure that the Anarchists and Syndicalists of Malaga are fighting for the soul of the human race, for a possible future against greedy savages who are fighting, with the blessing of the Church, only in defence of their own unearned and undeserved privileges. And I am equally certain that, whatever happens here, the battle will be repeated in the United States and in Great Britain on a more terrific scale, unless those of good intention first take things out of the hands of the existing political groups.

POSTSCRIPT, WRITTEN IN LONDON

After H.M.S. *Arrow* had taken off all but two or three of the British subjects still in Malaga, things were dismal. The government warships had left for the north, rebel warships were near, and we were threatened from Seville with a bombardment of the town from the sea and from the air, and with an immediate invasion by land. My two refugees very naturally were in a panic, and even urged me to leave them to their fate. But the new civil governor was ready to be obliging to the English, and quite possibly might not realize that Don Tomas was still a prisoner. We arranged an appeal, supported by two certificates, that Don Tomas required an operation which could be done only out of Spain, and that his mental stability was in danger. The Mexican consul put it into shape; the British acting consul very kindly agreed to present the documents in his own name, provided that I took them to the civil governor myself and did my best to persuade him. That I did, and in twenty-four hours, to our great relief, we got the formal permission.

But two days afterwards a blow came. General Franco was insisting that all adult Spaniards who had contrived to leave parts of Spain which were in possession of the government should at once re-enter to join his side, and the government, in view of that, and of the additional fact that "Rights" whom they allowed to leave almost invariably became violent and unscrupulous anti-government propagandists, issued an order prohibiting adult Spaniards from leaving Spain. The Committee de Enlace declared that the governor had no right to issue permits to leave Malaga. The acting consul very sorrowfully informed me that now he could not give the commander of the British ship the necessary assurance that the papers of Don Tomas and Dona Mercedes were in order. But I argued with him that as he had always refused to recognize any authority but that of the civil governor he could not admit

the power of the Committee de Enlace to cancel a permit already given. As it was a case of life or death he agreed to take that view, but insisted that I must deliver my friends on the quay, as he could not use his official status as a neutral to pass them through the town and the closely guarded port gates.

Fortunately there were two or three days before *H.M.S. Ardent* was due to leave for Gibraltar, and time to work out a plan. Don Tomas and Dona Mercedes were well known by sight; to be arrested in the act of trying to escape would have been almost certainly fatal to them and very tiresome for me. But fortunately they were not in the habit of taking the air in the public places of the town, hatless and unsmart. Fortunately, also, Don Tomas had already strolled up to my garden from the hospital accompanied by his guards and I got him to come once or twice alone, his guards preferring to take an hour or two off with their own companions. On the last morning he came up alone and waited at one side of the garden, whilst down below my front gate I put in a waiting taxi their coats and hats in three small bags, each conspicuously labelled in my name. Then we got in, I very much the traveller in overcoat, muffler and hat, they very much casual strollers. I bade the driver stop at the post office, which is opposite a shady public promenade with seats. At the post office we got out, and for the benefit of the driver, whose taxi had the Anarchist flag, we had a touching farewell with cries of "until Christmas" and so forth. I got into the taxi and gave the order to drive to the port whilst they crossed to the park, and in accordance with directions joined the morning strollers, and sat down on a public seat, doubtless for the first time in their lives. As I expected, I was stopped at the port gates and the door of the taxi opened by the armed guards. But I was English, and they waved me on without more than a glance at the modest luggage. We drove on to the customs, where I deposited the bags and my hat and coat, dismissed the taxi, and then, a casual stroller, idly watched some fishing boats until a chance came of strolling out again unchallenged. Then I found my friends, naturally very disturbed in mind. We moved to a seat nearer to the port gates and, to fit better into the environment, I called a shoeblack and we had our shoes polished. Then came a lucky chance and we were able to pass through the gates, nearly to safety. Before long, thanks to the two consuls, they were passed through to the British launch and swiftly taken to the *H.M.S. Ardent*, which was lying outside the harbour. I had an anxious twenty

minutes waiting for the last trip of the launch, as trouble had arisen with the officials, but the commander had promised me that once on board his ship my friends were safe. Before long I too was in the care of the British navy.

I finish this chapter in London, after all. I was depressed at having outwitted my kind Anarcho-Syndicalist friends, who had helped me to the limits of their power. But I was a little vain about having completed a task, although not one of my own seeking, and I rejoiced that the "babies," with whom I had fallen in love, had recovered their parents. But to my humiliation and grief, the B.s quickly re-entered Spain, to the rebels' side.

*Sir Peter Chalmers-Mitchell caused much comment in the summer of 1937 by refusing to leave Malaga, although he was in danger from the heavy fighting. This extract is his own account of his adventures during this period.—En.*

# THE PIRATE WHO CONQUERED AN EMPIRE

By  
DENIS CLARK

**B**EAUTY and terror, careless life and sudden death, went hand in hand on the old Spanish Main. Those coral islands, rich champagnes, gold sands and forests fringing the sea were for men's easy living, yet men brought there death and agony and little else. The Indian inhabitants, whose brilliant tamed macaws went free each morning to join the wild-flocks, surprising travellers with their human speech; those Indians taught the dread Inquisition further exercises for its passionless cruelty. They would tie a prisoner to a tree, strike thorns twisted in oil-soaked cotton right into his skin till he bristled like a hedgehog, and then set him afire.

Whoever had gold must suffer. When the Indians had been utterly subdued and their treasure ravished, it was their conqueror's turn. As Spain's strength failed, so did new races come to harrass her colonists, tearing at her empire's bulk like killers round a whale. She lashed them, but always there was one to fasten on her throat: François, who with a handful of men captured the galleon loaded with pearls from the Spanish fisheries; the demoniac L'Ollonois, who on his way of pillage tore out a living Spaniard's heart and devoured it before his men. As they found strength and the treasure ships became fewer, sea pirates became land pirates, attacking the island ports and mainland cities.

Inland they marched, discounting hardship and the enemy's numbers, privateers, pirates, buccaneers, of whom the last and greatest was Henry Morgan from Wales. He was the last because it became his business to stamp out the practice of his own calling, but before his reformation he dealt the heaviest blow of any to old Spain in the Americas.

On a January evening in 1669 a shipboard banquet was held off the isle of Hispaniola (now Haiti) in the Caribbean. As the hard-bitten, cosmopolitan rout of guests put down their rum-flip and Spanish wine, they drank to a host who portentous mien overbore every other member of the company. This was a



gentleman with a full, sanguine countenance, two very wide-opened eyes set far apart and a strong straight nose, from a little below which, as from two gun-ports, puffed out on either hand a plume of moustache like a miniature cannon-blast. His ruthless mouth was keeled by a tiny tuft of beard. Thick hair curled down on his brocaded shoulders, and close under his jowl was knotted a huge cravat with an elaborate bow.

Among the revellers one group alone seemed disinclined to forget dull care. They were the officers of a French privateer who had that evening put into Cow Bay and at once been cordially invited aboard Morgan's great ship. But a short while since it had been conveyed to them that though they might be honoured guests they were also prisoners, not permitted to return to their own vessel anchored close at hand.

Such was Henry Morgan's hospitality on board his frigate the *Oxford*. The French captain had not seen eye to eye on certain points of their future conduct of affairs against the Spaniards—hence his captivity. Morgan had quietly sent over a prize crew, which took possession of the French ship while its officers sat at his board. The feasting was at its crescendo when a number of explosions sounded across the bay, making glass and silver clink together.

"My fellows are firing the prize-ship's guns in sport," Morgan informed his startled guests reassuringly. "They rejoice that we go against Maracaibo."

At this last word confirming the rumours of their leader's plans, there was a great yell of applause. Maracaibo! A rich prize, a rare town indeed, if they might take it. It was but a few years since L'Ollonais had raided there, but the Dons would have had plenty of time to store more gold that flowed in ever from the hinterland. They vented their approbation when suddenly the accompanying *feu de joie* swelled deafeningly to a devastating roar of dire explosion which set the whole ship a-rocking, while the plate and silver shot into the revellers' laps and a tearing blast and shock through the open ports dowsed every lantern on the ship. As the disordered company scrambled towards the companion-way a commanding, resonant voice rang through the darkness.

"Be seated, gentlemen. 'Tis but my rascals have put fire to the Frenchman's powder."

He roared for fresh lights as there began to sound an ominous patter mingled with sundry heavy thuds and bangs on the deck above them.

"What goes up must come down," he remarked prosaically,

pouring himself some more wine. "The rogues deserve it for losing a good ship."

Morgan, the leader of the buccaneers, was then about thirty-four years old. He had come to Barbados some years earlier; some said as a kidnapped slave, though since he had an uncle in a position of some authority in the West Indies it seemed likely that he had arrived, like many another young man, to seek his fortune where fortunes were easy for those with some courage and few scruples. Gold glittered for a strong man's grasping in the twilight of the Spanish empire.

His enterprises had started at Jamaica with a post on one of two pirate vessels with which he went on several voyages, the profits from which enabled the pirates to buy another ship of which he was given command. After certain foraging cruises down the Campeche coast Morgan was invited to join an expedition against the Spaniards, organized by one Mansvelt, an old pirate, who, impressed by his record, appointed him vice-admiral. Fifteen ships set sail from Port Royal in Jamaica with five hundred men, "Walloons and French," arriving at the Isle of Santa Katalina off Costa Rica, which they took from its garrison, seizing many prisoners for ransom. Up the river Colla they sailed, pillaging as they went, until they heard that the governor of Panama came against them with a large force. Unwilling to encounter him at their present strength, they turned back to Jamaica, leaving a garrison of their own at Santa Katalina. On their way to Tortuga (Turtle) Island, the buccaneer's base, Mansvelt was taken sick and died. Morgan was elected his successor, chief of the buccaneers of the Caribbean.

The buccaneers were at that time a more formidable and organized community than perhaps is generally known. The uncouth hunters of wild swine and oxen, who lived year-long in the forests and prairies, clad in garments stained with the blood of their prey, shod with the slaughtered animals' skins, bringing the "boucaned" meat to the ports for the buying or barter of seafarers, had evolved into the staunch "Brotherhood of the Coast." The evolution of the "Brotherhood" had been brought about partly through the rapacity of its more enterprising members, partly through the persecution of that race against which they were all now so stoutly united. Spain had been adamant against any foreigners or heretics trafficking in her dominions or, indeed, coming there at all. Her right she considered not only that of discovery and conquest but almost divine, since all lands west of a

certain "line," arbitrarily selected by him, had been allotted as their particular province by Pope Alexander VI. Yet, while trying to keep all trade for herself, she could not supply her own colonists with much that they needed. The other nations approached and were repulsed. When France founded a colony in Florida in 1562 it was exterminated. In 1604 the American Spaniards captured two English vessels, cut off the hands, feet, ears and noses of their crews, and, smearing them with honey and binding their arms and legs left them to the mercy of blazing sun and teeming insects.

The first buccaneers were Frenchmen, who naturally had little love for their Spanish neighbours, but these were soon joined by British, Lowlanders and Portuguese. It was a Frenchman who founded their citadel of Tortuga: Levasseur, who fortified it and built there his little stronghold "The Dove-cote." Tortuga quickly became a great centre of commerce and revelry, where freebooters forgathered, and the streets were filled with "pipes" of wine and gay ladies.

"My own master," wrote Exquemelin, himself a buccaneer for a time and their most detailed recorder, "would buy on like occasions a whole pipe of wine, and, placing it in the street, would force everyone that passed by to drink with him; threatening also to pistol them in case they would not do it. At other times he would do the same with barrels of ale or beer. And, very often, with both his hands he would throw these liquors about in the streets, and wet the clothes of such as walked by, without regarding whether he spoiled their apparel or not, were they men or women."

It was a strange thing that these same unbridled gentlemen could show such marvellous endurance and fortitude as they did upon occasion. They were profligates, but they were very certainly men.

Marching at the head of these bravoes, Morgan attacked El Puerto del Principe, an important Spanish sea-town, with twelve sail and seven hundred fighting men. At first he had considered attacking Havana, but was finally dissuaded because no one knew its strength, and he, as yet, was not fully assured of his own. As they drew near the coast a Spanish sailor leapt overboard to swim ashore and betray them. The garrison got ready, while the townsmen set about hiding their gold, and barriers and ambuscades were erected in all the approaches. These the invaders avoided and soon the Spanish reconnoitring horsemen observed them advancing on the town with drums beating and colours flying. After a desperate battle in which its governor was killed, the town was taken. Men, women, children and slaves were shut up in the churches while the

pirates revelled and plundered, and there they were neglected until most of them starved to death. Only the more comely women were kept free for the pirates' sport and some of the better citizens taken for ransom or tortured to reveal the hiding-places of their treasure.

Next, Morgan went against Porto Bello, telling his men, who murmured at their small number for the enterprise, that there would be all the more spoil for each. Porto Bello was a strong town on the Darien isthmus, the trading place for Panama, where the great merchants came once a year from that city to negotiate with the company of negroes from West Africa, who came to sell slaves. The buccaneers sailed up-river and took to canoes (a favourite craft with them) leaving a few men only to take the great ships to port. Guided by an Englishman who had been prisoner there, they captured the city and, putting all its garrison into one turret, blew them up with their own powder. But in one tower the governor and some soldiers kept up a fierce defence, until at last Morgan in desperation had wide scaling ladders made, which captured nuns and monks were forced to carry and set against its walls. A large number of these unfortunates, in spite of their pleading and protests, were killed by the missiles of their own people, but at last his men scaled the walls, armed with fireballs, and soon the town was utterly given over to pillage. Here again, many of the inhabitants were hunted, caught and tortured to reveal their treasure. The governor of Panama again advanced threateningly from his citadel, but this time it was he who thought better of it and withdrew while Morgan taunted him with ironic messages and gifts.

Eight days after the inadvertent blowing up of the French ship in Cow Bay Morgan ordered the bodies of the over-rash revellers to be fished out of the sea, where they still floated. This he did, explains Exquemelin, not out of any design to afford them Christian burial but only to obtain the spoil of their clothes and other attire. He then set sail with his fleet, landing some of his men at Ocoa to obtain meat from the Spanish settlers. Here, not surprisingly, they had a brush with the indignant Dons, before they sailed on for Maracaibo.

Maracaibo was situated on a landlocked lake, the bar of which was guarded by a strong little fort. This they took, though the Spaniards left it mined, and it was only Morgan's own quick observation and action that saved himself and his men. He "snatched away" the slow fuse that else would have sent them all

to the sky, and presently his little fleet crossed the bar. Nothing could save Maracaibo, and its wretched inhabitants fled to the woods, except for some who were caught and racked to disclose their treasures' hiding-places. This practice was not infallible. They twisted cords round the head of one unfortunate idiot "until his eyes burst from his skull" and he cried, "Torture me no more and I will show you all my riches!" Eagerly they followed him to a wretched hovel where he revealed to their ravening eyes a few broken dishes and other rubbish. Needless to say, this poor "natural" was made short work of.

When they sought to leave with their booty they found three Spanish galleons waiting for them within the bar. This was unpropitious, because their own fleet was mostly composed of small boats; yet with a stout heart and inimitable effrontery Morgan sent word demanding from their admiral a ransom for not "putting Maracaibo to the flame." To this he received an extremely menacing though courteous reply, in which he was informed that in addition to his advantageous position the Spanish admiral had refortified and garrisoned the fortress guarding the entrance.

After some haggling, the pirates seeking for terms but refusing to part with one of their plundered pieces of eight\* or more than half of their captured slaves, Morgan unexpectedly sent a fireship, disguised as an ordinary vessel even to the combustible models of men upon its decks, which was grappled to the leading Spanish ship and by good fortune burnt her to the water. The second ship was scuttled by its panicking crew, and the third was taken by the pirates, who, not content, decided to assault the little fort once more. After losing thirty men they were forced to recant and satisfied themselves by sending a message to the admiral, who had escaped ashore, demanding their reward for not firing Maracaibo. He, knowing they still must pass under his guns in the fort, paid to them thirty thousand pieces of eight and five hundred cattle. Morgan fully realized that he was not out of the lake, or the wood either, and divided his handsome loot among all his fleet (they had 250,000 pieces of eight in money and jewels besides a huge quantity of merchandise and slaves) thus persuading them to embark upon a stratagem. By daylight he filled his shore-boats with men and sent them to the land, but when they were hidden in the mangroves they did but lie flat in the boats' bottoms and so were brought back again, while the Dons thought that he sent all his men ashore for a land attack on their fort, and therefore shifted all their heavy guns

\*A "piece of eight" was equal to nearly four shillings.

to the landward side. Night having come, Morgan weighed anchor with his ships and, without setting sail, let the ebb-tide drift them quietly into open water. So they escaped once more. As he went off he ordered "seven great guns with bullets to be fired against the castle, as it were to take leave of them. But they answered not so much as with a musket-shot." Perhaps there was no more spirit left in them.

He was officially reprimanded by Sir Francis Modyford, British governor of Jamaica, for these spirited doings. Sir Francis had for some time been trying to encourage friendliness between Spain and his own people, but such a *rapprochement* was utterly rejected by the buccaneers and all who had formerly suffered from the Spaniards. In July 1670 a treaty was signed between His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain and Charles II of Great Britain. This was considered by the buccaneers a direct incitement to perform some signal exploit against the Spanish, more especially since it was known that, though peace might be declared, the Spaniards were preparing at Panama to launch a crushing attack against the British settlers in the Caribbean. Henry Morgan debated with his chiefs as to whether Carthagena (seat of the Inquisition in the west), Vera Cruz or Panama should be their next objective, eventually deciding on the last as being, if one of the most powerful, the richest city of the Spanish Americas. This decision happily coincided with another summons from the governor. Modyford's views had changed since he had heard of six war vessels come from Spain to make the English answer for various grievances of His Most Catholic Majesty, while in June a Spanish expedition had landed in Jamaica from two galleons and attacked the governor's particular territory. He pressed on Morgan a commission as commander-in-chief of all ships of war, his duties being to defend the island, to seize and destroy enemy ships, and attack any port where materials or vessels for war existed, in reward for which he should have "all the goods, merchandises, etc., which may be got in this expedition. . . ." Finally articles were drawn up by the governor empowering Morgan "to do all manner of exploits" against the Spaniards. Could a buccaneer want better terms?

Articles, too, were drawn up by Morgan for his assembled filibusters, among them a list of certain compensations to be gained by dire misfortune in the field, as: Loss of both legs, fifteen hundred pieces of eight or fifteen slaves as the beneficiary might choose; Loss of an eye, one hundred pieces of eight or one slave; and so on—

His fleet consisted of thirty-seven ships with two thousand fighting men, besides sailors and boys. The leading vessel carried twenty-two great brass guns and six small ones, and the rest, some twenty, some sixteen, some eighteen.

Their first attack was against Santa Katalina, which the Spaniards had some time back retaken. The enemy put up a very poor resistance, deserting their batteries, and the governor, on being threatened with short shrift by Morgan, proposed that: "Captain Morgan would come with his troops by night and intercept him . . . taking him prisoner and using the formality as if they forced him to deliver the castle. And that he would lead the Englishmen in under the fraud of being his own troops. . . . That on one side and the other there should be continual firing, but without bullets, or at least into the air."

And so it was done. After a fierce but insincere affray the fort was taken, and the pirates, who had been on very short commons, feasted on the Spanish pullets and cattle. They took some spoil and store of arms and powder from this town.

Hereupon they set out for the second fortress on the long road to Panama, which was that of Chagre, whither Morgan sent four ships and a boat, filled with men, by river. It was strongly pallisaded, on a mountain above the river and the sea, and the defenders put up a very stout resistance: for it must not be judged by the craven acts of some that the Spaniards were not a very gallant race, for they were renowned as fighting men throughout the world. Yet in the end it fell, undone by as strange a chance as ever happened in warfare. A pirate, shot by an arrow, tore it out, twisted some cotton about it, and fired it back from his musket. But the ignited cotton set two or three palm-thatched houses flaming and soon the powder supply exploded. Then the attackers breached the stockade, entering despite "many flaming pots, full of combustible matter and odious smells." The casualties of that attack were heavy. They lost over one hundred killed, and seventy wounded.

So exultant were Henry Morgan and the rest of his bully-boys when they beheld, on their way up river, the British flag flying over Chagre, that steering was neglected and four vessels, including his own, sunk though without loss of life. He was received in triumph and the pirates set about feasting and their other customary diversions, undaunted by the news that the governor of Panama awaited them with three thousand six hundred men before that city.

Now Morgan gathered his men for the last stage of their long journey of conquest. Though the distance to go was no more than fifty miles as the crow flies, he knew that infinite hardship and opposition lay in their way. Five hundred he left to garrison Chagre, one hundred and fifty on his ships on the river. This left him but twelve hundred, the rest having been slain or wounded. With high hearts and little provision they set forth. At long last the buccaneers were coming to a reckoning with their ancient enemy.

They left in thirty-two canoes with five boatloads of artillery. Six leagues up the river some went ashore to stretch and seek for food, but the Spaniards had removed everything that men might eat. Since for food that day they had relied on despoiling certain ambuscades which the Spaniards were said to have set, but which they found deserted, they went hungry, with little other comfort than pipes of tobacco.

Very early next morning they pressed on, coming at evening to a place where the river was low for want of rain and blocked with trees. Morgan landed his men, all but one hundred and sixty to guard the boats, and on the third morning started overland. But the going was so bad, so steep and overgrown, that they were forced to return to the boats and proceed by them however arduous the passage. Thus they made little progress, and the hungry pirates greatly desired to meet with some Spaniards or Indians so that they might fill their bellies with the enemy's food.

On the fourth day most of them set off again by land with guides that they had brought, though some still continued in canoes. A scout informed them of an ambuscade, which rejoiced them infinitely since they thought they might find food. But, alas, they found the knavish Spaniards had fled, leaving nothing but crumbs of the good bread they had eaten and a small number of empty leather bags. The intrepid but ravenous buccaneers fell to eating these bags, which served those who were thrifty with supper as well as lunch. "Some persons," remarks Exquemelin, rather disdainfully, "who never were out of their mothers' kitchen may ask how these pirates could eat, swallow and digest those pieces of leather, so hard and dry: unto whom I only answer: That could they once experience what hunger, or rather famine, is, they would certainly find the manner, by their own necessity, as the pirates did. For these first took the leather, and sliced it in pieces. Then did they beat it between two stones, and rub it, often dipping it in the water of the river to render it by these means



supple and tender. Lastly, they scraped off the hair, and roasted and boiled it upon the fire. And, being thus cooked, they cut it into small morsels, and eat it, helping it down with frequent gulps of water, which by good fortune they had nigh at hand."

On the fifth day, when it seems incredible that in that blazing heat or stifling forest, white men could survive such privation, they came to another deserted ambuscade and some plantations which they searched, "hopeful to relieve their extreme and ravenous hunger." In a rock-hewn grotto they found at last two sacks of meal, fruit, and two great jars of wine. Morgan had sufficient control, after this terrific test of his men's metal, to be able to ration these heaven-sent supplies among those who were in worst case, for by now many were so weak that they could only be carried in the canoes. Those who were fit and had come so far in the canoes were ordered to land and march with the little array, which advanced late into the night in desperate hopes of discovering further stores.

On the sixth day they were forced very often by the rough, steep way and their own weakness to take rests. They tried to stave off their stomachs' pangs with leaves and blades of grass. The sun scorched them black. The vicious insect swarms assailed them maddeningly. Yet they stumbled on, with the treasure-lure before them. At noon they arrived at a plantation where was a barn filled with maize. They beat down the doors and rushed to devour the hard, dry meal, unmoistened, unprepared. Afterwards they loaded themselves with the grain and marched on until suddenly they encountered an ambush of Indians. Delighted, they improvidently cast away their maize to despoil them, but the Indians fled, leaving nothing, while a troop on the river's other side shot some of the buccaneers and taunted them.

That night they camped with intent to cross the river next day; and now there were many murmurings against Morgan and the expedition, some saying that they should turn back, though others would not on any account, having come so far, while yet others (possibly some who had kept back a little of the wine) "did laugh and joke at all their discourses."

On the seventh morning they cleaned their arms, discharging their pistols and muskets to see that all were in order. They crossed the river to a town called Cruz, whose chimneys they saw bravely smoking so that they hoped for fine discoveries in the Spanish kitchens. But the houses were all on fire and there was nothing to eat but a few dogs and cats, which only served to whet their

appetites. Yet at last in the king's stable they found jars of wine and some bread, of which, no sooner had they eaten and drunk, than all fell sick, so that they thought they had been poisoned, though probably the cause was nothing else but their own weakness.

Here Morgan was forced to leave his canoes, which he sent back, all but one, to Chagre. He ordered his men to keep together because of the Indians and Spaniards in the woods, and sent two hundred men forward to discover the way to Panama. These were attacked by Indians with volleys of arrows, so that eight buccaneers were killed and ten wounded before they were beaten off. Morgan came up with his vanguard and, marching into the open, they saw a mountain, held by Indians, right in their way. He took measures against their guerrilla attacks, and they settled for the night in heavy rain with scarcely any shelter, for the Indians had burnt all huts and lodges.

Next day they pressed on, with clouds low over their heads, of which Morgan was very glad as a relief from the searing sun, and after two hours march encountered a troop of mounted Spaniards. They climbed the great mountain to view the surrounding country, and from its summit they saw not far away the Pacific Sea, giving them great joy for it marked the limit of their journey. They could see the sails of Spanish galleons drifting over the brilliant blue. Hastily they descended, to find, to their exultation, a valley filled with cattle, of which they slaughtered and devoured a very great many, gaining back strength for the approaching battle. Half-raw, they ate the flesh, the blood running down their beards "until they looked like cannibals." Soon afterwards, with a large troop of Spaniards hanging upon their flank, they saw a sight that crowned the whole arduous journey: a steeple pointing above the trees to the evening sky, the highest steeple of Panama!

No sooner did the buccaneers see it than all woes were forgotten. They threw their hats in the air and gambolled for joy. Their trumpets rang out, their drums began to rattle, and although Spaniards, attracted by the hubbub, yelled threats and promises for the morrow and the great guns from the city began to play upon their camp, although they perceived that their retreat had been cut off already by a powerful force, they "began every one to open their satchels, and, without any preparation of napkins or plates, fell to eating very heartily the remaining pieces of bulls' and horses' flesh which they had reserved since noon. This being done, they laid themselves down to sleep upon the grass with great

repose and huge satisfaction, expecting only with impatience the dawning of the next day."

So, on the tenth morning Morgan assembled them and led them against Panama. By his guide's advice they went by the woods and so avoided and foiled all the Spanish ambushes and preparations against them. Mounting a hill, they saw the Spanish array in the plain before the city. Two squadrons of cavalry, they saw, four regiments of foot, and an enormous herd of wild bulls waiting to be driven against them. At this menacing sight their spirits were dashed and they stood for some time irresolutely. But Morgan cheered them on with heartening words and presently they swore valiantly to do or die and descended the hill. Two hundred of their best shots went before them, and these knelt as the Spanish horsemen came galloping against them, delivering such a volley as made them fall "like rotten pears." These horsemen were handicapped in their manœuvres by the marshiness of the ground. Before they could come on again, the rest of Morgan's band rushed on the footmen of Panama with hangers and half-pikes, separating them from the horse whom they supported. Then the Spaniards set the great herd of two thousand cattle in motion against them. With a rumble of hooves, bellowing in a cloud of dust and steam through which their crescent horns loomed like terrible weapons, the beasts came charging. But, terrified by the explosions, most of the bulls broke away right and left, while the rest were coolly despatched by the buccancers, who were very used to such work.

After two hours of desperate fighting, the Spanish cavalry shattered and most of them slain, the disheartened footmen suddenly threw down their arms and fled. The buccancers were too tired to follow them, but they were cut off and could not hide in the woods, so that most of them were afterwards slain without mercy.

Having rested a little, Morgan continued his advance on the city, losing many men from the heavy guns on its walls. After three hours' assault the garrison surrendered, and thus at last, triumphantly, they marched into their goal.

Unfortunately, the Spanish slaves had set fire to Panama, which was built chiefly of wood, much of it of cedar and other rare woods. Eight monasteries and two great churches, very richly furnished, besides very many magnificent merchants' houses were consumed in the roaring flames, mingled with which sounded the screams of those who had hidden from the pirates. These quitted the city until the flames died down, when they returned and set about pillaging it. Most loot they found hidden in wells and cisterns,

but little time was wasted before troops of them were searching the surrounding country for refugees. Morgan was thrown into a great fury because, before he came, the best of the city's wealth had been sent away, at news of their approach, in a galleon, disappeared into the Pacific. He despatched twenty-five men after it in a captured vessel, but these were too preoccupied with the women they forced to go with them to give stern chase, and so that rich ship got away.

Still, plenteous booty, fair women, tempting food and excellent wines were yet to be found in Panama, and Morgan gave his men their fill of them: and a buccancer's fill appears to have been that of any three men today. After their hardship they surely deserved it. With Panama as a base armed crews set sail to capture Spanish shipping, while at Chagre the pirate garrison decoyed gullible merchants in with the Spanish colours. Very busy were the buccancers at both stations, those at Chagre scouring the Caribbean coasts as Morgan's braves hunted fugitive Spaniards along the shores and hinterland of the Pacific. Those whom they took were racked and tortured in ingenious fashions, so that their treasures swelled daily. Women were spared no more than men, unless they yielded themselves to the buccancers' passions. However, one brief gleam of chivalry shines out here to the personal credit of that formidable and, so far, apparently heartless filibuster, Morgan. A lady was taken, "her years were but few, and her beauty so great as peradventure I may doubt whether in all Europe any could be found to surpass her perfections either of comeliness or honesty." Her husband had some weeks since gone to Peru.

From the first Henry Morgan singled her out for particular attention. He made some impression, for, the lady had heard that "they were heretics, who did neither invoke the Blessed Trinity nor believe in Jesus Christ." But now she began to have better thoughts of them, "having experimented the manifold civilities of Captain Morgan, especially hearing him many times to swear by the name of God and of Jesus Christ."

Yet she repulsed him, so that at last in impatience he had her confined "in a darksome and stinking cellar." But after three weeks, when he left Panama and took her among his prisoners for ransom, finding that her ransom had been provided by relations but embezzled by priests, he released her out of hand and let her go free without dishonour.

On February 24, 1671, the buccancers left the remains of Panama, with one hundred and seventy-five beasts loaded with spoil

and six hundred prisoners for ransom and slaves. These prisoners Morgan kept in hunger and thirst, to force them to reveal the place of their money and jewels. If they found no ransom he promised to take them with him back to Jamaica.

Half-way to Chagre he paraded his men and caused every one to be sworn that he had concealed nothing of value for himself, such being the rule of their articles. "Thus being done, Captain Morgan having had some experience that those lewd fellows would not much stickle to swear falsely in points of interest," he commanded each one to be searched, but was gracious enough to have himself searched too, down to the very soles of his shoes. This precaution was a new one, not altogether popular, but not without a cause founded on the future intentions of Henry Morgan.

Arrived at Chagre, he sent all his prisoners to Porto Bello, demanding by them a considerable ransom for the release of Chagre itself. But Porto Bello coldly made answer: "They would not give one farthing towards the ransom of the said castle, and the English might do with it as they pleased." For once Morgan's bluff had been called.

Then was division made of the spoil, and loud were the expressions of displeasure when each man found that his share of the profits of this great and hazardous enterprise was to be no more than two hundred pieces of eight, something less than forty pounds. This amount, supposing that even one thousand five hundred of the buccaneers survived, totalling 300,000 pieces of eight or sixty thousand pounds, seems puny and oddly significant, as spoil from the richest city of the Main. Even more significant was the fact that Morgan, finding himself the object of "many obloquies and detractions among his people," unexpectedly ordered all Chagres heavy ordinance to be put on board his vessel and sailed away without any notice to his men or even calling a council, only followed by three vessels of the whole fleet. "These were such (as the French pirates believed) as went shares with Captain Morgan towards the best and greatest part of the spoil which had been concealed from them in the dividend. The Frenchmen could very willingly have revenged this affront upon Captain Morgan and those that followed him, had they found themselves with sufficient means to encounter him at sea. But they were destitute of most things necessary thereunto—yea, they had much ado to find sufficient victuals and provisions for their voyage to Jamaica, he having left them totally unprovided in all things."

So Exquemelin (himself a Frenchman) takes leave disgustedly

of Morgan, but Morgan had by no means reached the peak of his career. When he returned to Jamaica he found that Sir Francis Modyford had been recalled to England, a prisoner, to answer charges of piracy against Spain, and very soon he himself was commanded to follow. Yet no misfortune came to him by this. He had wrought too well for England's good in his assault against her old and powerful enemy. Disgrace and punishment did not await him. Far from it, within eighteen months he was appointed deputy-governor of Jamaica, with the Earl of Carlisle as nominal governor to replace Modyford. At home they recognized his value as the most powerful and knowledgeable man in the West Indies. In 1674 he took office in Jamaica as Lieutenant-Governor under Lord Vaughan, and in November of that year was knighted Sir Henry Morgan.

So did he rise at length to the peak of British authority in the Americas, and he wrought well, for such a man as he was sorely needed there. To the end he remained in himself much of the buccaneer, drinking and gambling in the taverns of Port Royal. Governor Vaughan accused him of abetting privateers and cited him to appear before the council, but his popularity triumphed and he was thought so well of that in 1678 he acted as governor when Lord Vaughan was to be succeeded by Lord Carlisle, with whom he became on very good terms. Carlisle wrote of his "generous manner," adding that "however much he was paid he would be as poor as a beggar." Buccaneers, even reformed ones, cannot live within their incomes!

The old itch for adventure caused him to send home complaints of the depredations and commerce of the privateers, with suggestions for putting a stop to them. This he was accordingly set to do, and accomplished with good success, though he fell out with the council, and was heard to remark loudly in public "God damn the assembly," and so was dismissed. In 1688 he was reinstated but did not live long to give them the benefit of his initiative and experience, for in August of that year he died in Jamaica.

From the journal of H.M.S. *Assistance*:

"Sat. 25. This day about eleven hours noon Sir Henry Morgan died and the 26th was brought over from Passage-fort to the king's house at Port-Royall, from thence to the church, and after the sermon was carried to the pallisadoes and there buried. All these forts fired an equal number of guns, we fired two and twenty and after the *Drake* had fired, all the merchant men fired."

# HE SAW THE WHIRLWIND OF GOD

*By*  
OWEN RUTTER

"It is quite impossible for us to give you a visa for Mecca!" The secretary of the Arabian Legation in London pushed the passport across his desk and leant back in his chair to indicate that the interview was at an end.

The tall lean Englishman who was sitting opposite to him did not pick up the passport. He had not the slightest intention of taking the Arab official's "no" for an answer. He had travelled ten thousand miles to obtain that visa, and he was not a man who was easy to deter once his mind was set upon a purpose.

He was fully aware of the difficulties which confronted him. Mecca is a forbidden city. None but the true Muslim may tread its holy ground. But the Englishman, David Chale, was a true Muslim, as he had been pointing out to the secretary of the Arabian Legation. And he was determined to secure permission to make the pilgrimage to Mecca as his right.

David Chale had become a Muslim by profound conviction. He had spent many years in the Far East as an officer in the service of the Rajah of Sarawak. His work among the Mohammedan Malays of Borneo had brought him into close contact with their religion. He came to recognize the power for good that Islam exerted in their daily lives. He admired their tolerance, their humility, their courtesy, their self-control, their respect for parents, their charitableness to the poor. He saw their calm acceptance of the facts of life and death, and their unshakable belief in the efficacy of their faith and in the oneness of God.

But above all he envied them their peace of mind. He himself was a nervous, jumpy creature, up in the air one moment, down in the deeps the next: and there were his Malays, calm and poised and dignified, accepting what befell them as the will of God.

Working as he did eighteen hours a day in a tropical country, always at full stretch, he felt a terrible need for peace of mind.

Islam seemed to offer him that, yet he shrank from the decisive step of conversion. For a long time the thought of becoming a Muslim made him feel like a traitor to the religion in which he had been brought up. He suffered intense conflict of mind, but at length he made his decision, resigned from the Sarawak Service and became converted to Islam by pronouncing the formal declaration of faith:

"I believe in God and the oneness of God, and that Mohammed is the Prophet of God."

He received the Muslim name of Abdul Rahman.

As soon as he had embraced Islam, Chale determined to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, that holy journey to which all Muslims aspire, in spite of every hardship and deprivation. He did not doubt that he would have to overcome many obstacles. He cared not a rap for the ridicule with which he knew his European acquaintances would greet his conversion, but his inquiries had shown him that his mere declaration of faith would not act as a passport to Mecca. He had learned that the Arabs, always prejudiced against European Muslims, had of late become intensely suspicious of them and he realized that before he could hope to set foot in Mecca he must win their confidence. His knowledge of Arabic was sound, but he doubted whether that would be enough, and he had no wish to sail under false colours. He sought counsel of an old Malay friend of his, Mohammed Ali.

The old man pondered for a while. Then he said:

"If one goes into the forest, it is well to take a staff to keep one on the way."

Chale knew enough of Malay idiom not to misunderstand him.

"You mean that I should take a wife with me?" he asked.

"Yes, Tuan. A woman of Islam."

Chale saw the soundness of this advice at once. Every genuine Muslim had the right to make the pilgrimage; only those whose good faith was suspect encountered difficulties. A Muslim woman could go to Mecca without hindrance if accompanied by her husband—although not alone—and it was natural for a man to take his wife if he could afford it. When Chale saw that the very fact of his taking a woman would increase his prospects of getting through, it was characteristic of his determination that he did not hesitate to accept Mohammed Ali's advice and was prepared to marry a woman according to Muslim rites.



His choice fell upon a beautiful Malay girl named Munirah, whom he had known since she was a little girl. For her, as for him, it was a marriage of convenience. Like every Malay, man or woman, she ardently desired to reach Mecca. Every year she had watched the pilgrims embarking upon their journey and had wept because she was too poor to go with them. Chale offered her fulfilment of her dream, and she accepted.

They were married in Singapore and then prepared to set out on their great journey. But as soon as Chale tried to obtain a visa for Jeddah (the port of Mecca) from the Singapore authorities, he encountered suspicion and hostility. There was talk of "international complications." He was told that his motives and circumstances must undergo the closest scrutiny. He, therefore, decided to take Munirah to England and to obtain the necessary visas at the Arabian Legation in London, having little doubt that he would be able to convince the Legation of his genuineness.

It was, therefore, with feelings of astonishment and bitter disappointment that he heard the secretary's uncompromising refusal that December morning in 1935. But he knew that it would be folly to lose his temper or even to appear to be put out. Since his conversion the calm of Islam had soothed his naturally passionate temper and had taught him the wisdom of patience. Did not the Koran teach that the man who controlled his anger was stronger than he who overthrew his opponent in a wrestling match?

"What crime have I committed that I may not have the privilege of every Muslim?" he asked.

"None, that I know of. It is out of the question, that is all."

"But, why, in God's name?" demanded Chale, battling for self-control.

"How long did you tell me you had been a Muslim?"

"Six weeks."

"That is your answer. We have strict orders from King Ibn Saud that no European may be granted a visa for Mecca and the Hedjaz unless he has been a Muslim for at least six years."

For a moment Chale was staggered. This edict of the king took him completely by surprise. He felt an immense personal grievance for those bogus Muslims who had caused Ibn Saud to issue his decree. Still, they shouldn't keep him out. Master of himself again, he determined to get his way.

"Then give me a visa for Jeddah," he said.

"It would be useless to you unless you are prepared to wait in Jeddah for six years."

"The king's order makes it immensely hard for my wife," said Chale. "She has travelled with me all the way from Sarawak hoping to perform the pilgrimage."

Closely watching the Arab's eyes, Chale saw their expression change from indifference to interest.

"You did not tell me you were married," he said sharply.

"You didn't ask me."

"You have her passport?"

Chale produced it. The secretary scrutinized it through a magnifying glass.

"This certainly alters your case," he admitted. He spoke on the telephone to a colleague. Finally he said: "In the circumstances we will give your wife a visa for the Hedjaz. That covers Jeddah and means that she can go to Mecca and Medina."

"Thank you," said Chale. "And what about me? She cannot undertake the journey alone."

"We understand that perfectly. Therefore we will give you a visa for Jeddah. Once you are there it will depend entirely on the authorities whether you are allowed to go to Mecca or not. Will that content you?"

"Thank you," said Chale. "It is said that it is wise to wear sandals until God sends one slippers."

He left the legation with mixed emotions. Although he had not secured the visa for Mecca, at least he could land with Munirah at Jeddah. But the interview had revealed to him that the difficulty of reaching Mecca was even greater than he had imagined, and to Mecca he was determined to go.

The visas secured, Chale was anxious to reach Jeddah as soon as possible. The date of the annual pilgrimage was approaching and he did not know how long he might have to wait in Jeddah.

He and Munirah flew to Paris, took the train to Brindisi, and flew on to Alexandria. There they learned that there was an Egyptian pilgrim ship sailing from Suez in a few days. They obtained passages in her, and embarked.

They found an extraordinary collection of passengers on board: Turks, Syrians, Moroccans, Africans, Egyptians and a party of Afghans who had walked to Suez from their mountains and had been two years on the way. The pilgrims came from every class, poor and rich, simple and sophisticated, humble and well-born.

Some wore European suits and felt hats, others wore clothes whose fashion had not changed since the days of Mohammed. Every minute more came streaming up the gangway: mothers with babies strapped to their backs, children, and men so old that they could scarcely crawl on board; healthy people and dying people, the halt and the blind. Yet all had one thing in common: every face, smooth or wrinkled, was transfigured by an expression of calm happiness. It seemed to bind that strangely assorted company into a lovely unity. Poor and ragged, educated and well-to-do, all followed an ideal that was pure and selfless. All stood upon a common level: they were pilgrims to the Mother of Cities. They were exalted by the thought that soon God in His goodness would allow them to behold ancient Arabia, the country of His prophet, the Holy Land of Islam.

There were no cabins for the third-class passengers, and Chale watched them scurrying forward with their bundles, and staking out claims by spreading their mats or mattresses upon the deck and erecting flimsy screens for the protection of their women-folk. One man had a dried fish strapped to his arm. Others carried crates of fowls and ducks. They produced cooking-pots and unpacked their baskets of vegetables. The ship would provide a ration of cooked rice every day and hot water would be available on demand.

While the ship was at sea a muezzin summoned the pilgrims to prayer five times a day. They hurried aft, spread their praying-carpets, and turned towards Mecca for their devotions. A curious silence would fall over the ship. There was no sound but the steady chug-chug of the engines, the voice of the Imam who led in prayer, and the responses of the worshippers as their bodies rose and fell in supplication.

The ship anchored some distance from the port of Jeddah, owing to a maze of coral reefs, and the pilgrims went ashore in red-sailed Arab dhows. Chale was a conspicuous figure in his tussore-silk suit as he entered the ramshackle customs shed, which was in the charge of a sinister-looking Syrian, with black whiskers, one eye, two daggers and a sword. The whole place was in a turmoil, but finally Chale got his baggage through. The one-eyed Syrian told him to attend at the police-station in an hour.

He and Munirah found an Arab hotel, a lofty building of sandstone, many stories high. They were given a room on the fifth floor, furnished with a black iron bedstead, daubed with silver paint and hung with a pink mosquito-net, and a couple of

PIRATE WHO CONQUERED AN EMPIRE



MORGAN BEFORE PANAMA

*After a disastrous march Morgan, with twelve hundred men, conquered Panama, defended by three thousand six hundred men.*

DRAKE'S AMAZING VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD



ELIZABETH'S VAGABOND KNIGHT

*Sir Francis Drake, most audacious, reckless and adventurous of the brilliant band of adventurers that added lustre to Elizabeth's reign.*

rickety chairs. Leading out of the room was a bathroom with a water-jar and a tin dipper.

After a meal of rice and dates they made their way to the police-station, where they found the one-eyed Syrian, who examined their passports with an enormous magnifying glass. After asking Chale innumerable questions he said that Chale's papers must go to the chief of police, who would pass them to the Emir of Jeddah, who in turn would forward them to Mecca. How long would that take? A shrug indicated that One Eye did not know and did not greatly care.

Chale now realized that if his papers were to be dealt with in time for him to go on the pilgrimage he must have helpers in Jeddah and in Mecca. He knew that the control of the pilgrimage is largely in the hands of the sheiks of Mecca, Arabs of pure descent, who have their agents in Jeddah and in all the chief towns of the Moslem world. Each sheik has control of a definite region and when a Muslim wishes to go on the pilgrimage he entrusts his money and his affairs to the hands of one of the sheik's agents, who makes all arrangements for him.

So far Chale had not chosen a sheik, since he had been afraid of falling into the wrong hands, but now he saw that he must do so without delay. The police-station was thronged with agents of the various sheiks and Chale had seen one whose appearance impressed him favourably. His name was Mohammed Saleh, son of Mustapha Babli, the agent of Abdul Rhaman Getan, who Chale had heard was one of the most powerful sheiks of Mecca.

"Have you yet named a sheik?" inquired One Eye, when he had collected as many documents as Chale could give him.

"Not yet. But I now name Abdul Rahman Getan," said Chale in a loud voice.

"God be with you," replied One Eye, to indicate that the interview was at an end.

Chale and Munirah left the police-station with Mohammed Saleh, who assured them that he, his father and Sheik Abdul Rahman Getan, would do everything in their power to get the papers through quickly and assist them in every way while they remained in the Hedjaz.

They returned to the hotel, and sat in their room discussing ways and means. Chale was feeling more optimistic than he had felt for weeks.

Suddenly there was a clatter outside. The door was flung

open and six Arab soldiers marched into the room with rifles and fixed bayonets. They grounded their rifles on the floor. Their non-commissioned officer announced that he had a message from the chief of police.

"The chief of police wishes to tell you," he declared, "that you may have to stay in Jeddah a long time. It may be ten days, ten months, or ten years."

"Al-hamdu-lillah," replied Chale equably. "God's will be done."

The soldiers sloped their rifles and clumped out.

Salch then took Chale to meet his father, Mustapha Babli, a fine type of Arab, who advised him not to be depressed by the message from the chief of police.

"The plough bites deep only where the soil is soft, brother," he said. "Difficulties there may be, but my son and I will overcome them, if God wills."

He insisted that Chale and Munirah must stay in his house until they went to Mecca: but warned him that until his papers came through he must not leave the house unless accompanied by Salch and that on no account must he go outside the walls of Jeddah.

Chale realized that this meant that he was for all intents and circumstances a prisoner. But he accepted the situation and they moved to Mustapha Babli's house, an old stone building, five stories high with an immense wooden doorway. He was accommodated in Salch's room on the first floor, a spacious chamber spread with beautiful Meccan carpets. Along the walls was a continuous settee, with many cushions. On one side, jutting out over the street, was a large alcove with latticed windows; here the men spread their sleeping-mats at night. Munirah lived in the women's quarters, which were entirely separate from the men's.

On Mustapha Babli's advice Chale underwent the operation of circumcision, and discarded his European suit for Arab dress: the *mishlah*, a long flowing robe of woven camel's hair, concealing the white cotton shirt and trousers worn beneath it, and a white head-covering of plain cashmere, draped over the head to shelter the neck from the sun and kept in place by the rope-like *igal* of black camel's hair. He found the clothes comfortable and they made him less conspicuous. He now spoke Arabic fluently, and most people took him for a Syrian or a Turk.

Had it not been for his anxiety about the future, he would

have found his life in Jeddah agreeable enough. But as days went by and he had no news about his papers he grew more and more anxious. At his urgent request Saleh arranged an interview for him with the Emir of Jeddah, but although the Emir received him courteously it was clear that he was not to be hurried. The papers had been sent to Mecca, and it would be necessary to wait until they were returned.

Chale left the office more despondent than he had entered, but two days later was encouraged to find that Sheik Abdul Rahman Getan had come from Mecca to see him. He was an Arab of medium height, slightly lame, with large intelligent eyes. Both Saleh and Mustapha Babli treated him with the utmost deference, kissing his hand in greeting.

He announced that Feisal, the Emir of Mecca, was coming to Jeddah that very day and said that he had arranged for Chale to be given an audience.

The Emir's palace was a modern building, some distance outside the walls of Jeddah. When Chale was ushered into his presence he found him to be a man of great dignity and natural command. Seated upon a throne of ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl he listened intently as Chale explained his wish to go to Mecca, then promised to forward the papers to his father, King Ibn Saud, since no convert might go to Mecca without a permit granted under his personal seal.

Chale had not known that the king examined every application from a Muslim convert. He had imagined that Feisal himself had the power to grant permission, and had hoped to secure it. But he could see that it would be no good pleading, so he thanked the Emir and asked leave to depart.

A long period of waiting and suspense followed. Chale telephoned daily to Getan at Mecca to ask if there were any news, but none came. The day of the pilgrimage was drawing near. The city was full of passing people. Pilgrims were going up to Mecca all the time. Chale would watch them streaming through the gate on to the Mecca road, with envy in his heart, wondering how long it would be before he could follow them on a similar journey.

Then one morning Saleh came home jubilant. At last all was well, thanks be to God! Ibn Saud, had signed the papers and returned them to Jeddah. Chale hastened to the Emir's office, where he received the worst blow of all.

"Your papers are now in order," the Emir told him agreeably.



"They formally admit that you are a Muslim. But I have received no authority to give them to you, and whether you will be allowed to go to Mecca until six years have passed I cannot tell!"

Chale was frantic with anxiety but he refused to give in. He argued, he implored. But nothing would induce the Emir to hand over the papers without authority.

Chale left the office in a state of utter dejection. But when he reached Mustapha Babli's house he found everyone in a bubble of excitement. Ibn Saud was coming to Jeddah to express his sympathy to the British Minister on the death of King George. Here was a chance, said Mustapha Babli. An audience with the king might solve everything. He promised to contrive one.

Three days later Chale watched the king's arrival at the palace outside the city walls. His retinue preceded and followed him in a column of over a hundred Ford cars. On either side of his own car three of his personal bodyguard of negroes were standing on the running-board. They were dressed in scarlet, with drawn swords in their hands and pistols in their belts.

Thanks to the good offices of Mustapha Babli's friends, the king consented to receive Chale after the midday prayer.

When Chale entered the audience chamber in which he had met Emir Feisal, he saw that it was lined with black slaves who sat cross-legged on the floor, armed with pistols, swords and daggers.

The king was seated on the ebony throne, his hands resting upon his knees. Even in that position Chale could see that he was tall and powerful. His complexion was a rich deep-brown, his face bearded. One of his eyes was blind. Chale was struck with his alertness. His body was never still, and his head turned this way and that as he looked keenly from one person to another, although his hands never left his knees.

Chale was presented. The king touched his hand and gave him leave to be seated. Chale told his story, made his plea.

"If pilgrims are genuine I do not wish to prevent them from going to Mecca," declared the king. "That would be against the will of God. But if they be not true, then I will protect Mecca." He said this in an aggressive, emphatic manner, and added: "So I have been forced to make a rule that converts must not only have been Muslims for six years, but must have lived in Jeddah for six years."

Chale became desperate. By this time he had sized up Ibn Saud, and come to the conclusion that bold measures would

serve him best. The king was a fighter. He would appreciate a fighter.

"I came to Arabia," he said, "with the intention of performing the Haj in my heart. As King of the Faithful, Your Majesty knows that if a man's intention is genuine God will count him as having made the pilgrimage, even if his body be prevented from reaching the holy city. It is written in the Koran that if any man prevent a true believer from making the Haj he must take upon himself the sins of the other, who will be forgiven them as though he had been purified upon the Plain of Arafat."

Chale paused to let his words take effect. The king was silent, his restless body still for the first time since the audience began. Chale had worked himself up into a state of intense emotional excitement. His whole will was set on dominating the king's. He extended his lean forefinger and pointed it at the king's eyes.

"In preventing me going to Mecca," he said slowly, "is Your Majesty prepared to accept the burden of my sins?"

As he said these words, so pregnant with grave implication to a Muslim, he watched the king's face. He saw it blench. Ibn Saud, King of Arabia, was shaken: because, believing the Koran, he knew Chale to be justified in what he said.

Even so, his dignity forbade him to relent.

"Your words are true, Abdul Rahman," he said. "To turn a true believer back from the Holy City is a grave responsibility even for a king. Yet I cannot give my answer now. I must consult my advisers at Mecca, and I will send you speedy word."

But in spite of the king's promise the days passed and no answer came. Jeddah became almost empty. At last only two days remained. Chale was overcome by terrible despondency. Even Munirah, whose serene courage had supported him, now abandoned hope.

Suddenly Saleh came running to say that the Emir of Jeddah wanted to speak to Chale on the telephone. Chale hastened to the post office.

"I have received the king's permission for you to go to Mecca," said the Emir's voice.

"All thanks be to God!" said Chale.

"But that message has only come by telephone. I must wait for the letter of confirmation before I can allow you to leave."

"But it may not come for days, Your Highness!" cried Chale in despair.

"It will be necessary to wait."

Now Chale was ready to fight again. His old resolution returned, like life to a numbed limb.

"If I do not go now," he said, "the king will be angry. It is his will that I should go!"

There was a short silence at the end of the line. Chale felt that his thrust had gone home.

"I will telephone to Mecca and ask for the authority to be sent by special messenger," said the Emir at last. "It should arrive tonight."

Late that evening the one-eyed Syrian delivered the papers to Chale. A special car had brought them from the king. There was now nothing to prevent Chale and Munirah from going to Mecca in the morning.

He was up before dawn. The distance from Jeddah to Mecca is seventy miles. The only means of reaching the Holy City in time for the annual ceremonies was to hire a car. But when Chale reached the depot of the Government Monopoly he found that every car was gone.

Panic seized him. Without a car they could not arrive in time! Surely someone in Mecca must have a car. He would pay anything for it.

At last an enormous lorry, fitted with wooden benches, was discovered. Chale hired it at once. The driver had not been expecting to go to Mecca. He had no pass. Old Mustapha Babli went hobbling off to the police-station to secure the pass while Chale and Munirah made their purification for the journey, making a complete ablution of their bodies and then donning the *ihram*, the two pieces of seamless white cloth which every pilgrim must wear upon the holy journey. Then they loaded their suitcases on the lorry, and set off for the Holy City.

As the lorry bumped and bounced over the rough road they passed little bands of stragglers chanting the pilgrims' hymn, "*Labayyk Allahumma labayyk*"—"Here am I, O God, here am I!" When Chale stopped the lorry and picked up the weakest of them, they gave him no thanks, but praised God for His mercy in allowing them to reach Mecca in time.

At length they passed the two whitewashed stones which mark the boundaries of the Holy Land, where none but Muslims may tread. The pilgrims began to chant with renewed fervour. A few miles farther on Munirah clutched Chale's hand with a gasp of wonder and relief.

There was Mecca!

It lay before them, gleaming in the sunshine, surrounded by a rampart of tawny hills. They could see the flat-topped buildings and the minarets of the great roofless mosque, whose vast courtyard is open to the sky.

Chale had no eyes for the loveliness of that scene, upon which only a Muslim may look. To him Mecca was less a city than an idea which for over a thousand years had drawn men and women from all over the world together in brotherhood and worship. As he gazed upon the city whose name has become a synonym for the goal of men's desires, he felt that he was in the presence of something that was linked to the Divine.

Leaving the lorry at the city gate they made their way through the narrow streets dense with the pilgrims of many nations, to Getan's house. Getan greeted them warmly.

"You are come by God's will," he said.

He had engaged for them a guide-instructor who would teach them the ritual of the ceremonies to be performed. There was no time to be lost, and after a short rest they set off to join in the procession round the Kaaba, the ancient house of God, which stands in the centre of the courtyard of the great mosque: a plain oblong building of brown basalt, immensely old, covered with a vast black cloth embroidered in gold thread with texts from the Koran. This is the pivot round which the faith of Islam revolves. It is the very heart of Islam, and every pilgrim must make seven circuits of the marble pavement which surrounds it, stopping once to kiss the sacred black stone which is embedded in one corner of the building and protected by a silver mount. Many Muslims believe that the stone came from Paradise, when it was pure white, and that it is now black from absorbing the sins of the pilgrims who kiss its surface. It is said that it is the only relic of an older building and that Abraham used it as a foundation stone when he re-built the temple by God's command.

Chale and Munirah joined the tide of pilgrims making the circuit. As they approached the stone the crush became greater.

Chale and Munirah had a terrible struggle not to be swept away. So fierce was the press that Chale had his *mishlah* torn from his back. He grabbed it before the crowd could trample it underfoot and forced his way through the seething mass, Munirah clinging to him, terrified but intent. It needed all his strength to force his way through, and even then they could not reach the stone because a Bedouin in front of them was clinging to the

silver mount and refused to move. He paid no heed to the commands of the Arab policeman who stood beside the stone, armed with a stick, and seemed oblivious to pain when belaboured over the head and shoulders, but clung on, his lips pressed fervently to the stone. At last the policeman dislodged him. There was a rush for the next place, but the policeman held off the crowd so that Munirah could take her turn. By this time she, too, had caught the fervour and clung to the stone with such ecstasy that Chale had difficulty in getting her away after he had performed the ceremony himself.

They fought their way through the crowd again to drink water from the holy well of Zem Zem, which Muslims identify with the well which God showed Hagar in the wilderness, and then, having completed the required ceremonies, they joined the procession of pilgrims to the Plain of Arafat, which lies fifteen miles north-west of Mecca, joining a throng of camels, donkeys, Arab ponies, cars and lorries, and pilgrims marching on foot.

The plain was a vast encampment of tiny tents. They pitched their own and next day awaited the great moment of the pilgrimage.

As soon as the afternoon prayer was over the pilgrims came streaming from their tents. Plucking off the upper garments of their *ihram* they began waving them wildly to the sky and from three hundred thousand voices rose the tumultuous chant, "*Labayyk Allahumma labayyk!*"

While the chanting was at its height, while the pilgrims were swaying in supplication for the forgiveness of their sins, while the white *ihram* were fluttering like the banners of an army, out of the valley swept that mysterious wind of which Chale had so often heard: the whirlwind of Arafat.

He saw it coming: a vast pillar of whirling sand, dark against the blue sky. Every man and woman upon the plain had been expecting it. For thirteen hundred years it had come, punctually at the same hour, on the day of the pilgrimage and on that day only. The chanting and the supplications increased in fervour as the wind came racing and raging over the plain with a menacing droning sound. As it hit the tents it laid most of them flat. The crack of snapping poles and the ripping of canvas added to the uproar. The pilgrims bent their half-naked bodies to the stinging sand. Some leapt to seize the tent-ropes before they were hurled away. Others ran to the panic-stricken beasts. Camels and donkeys were stampeding. Terrified sheep, awaiting sacrifice, went careering through the crowd. The women set up a shrill yelling behind

their screens. On every side men were groping, gasping, falling, their hair awry, their bodies buffeted by the wind and smitten by the sand.

Three times the wind stormed round the plain; then died away with as little warning as it had come. For a few moments an intense calm fell. Then, from the pilgrims, went up a great sigh of content and satisfaction: one massed murmur of thankfulness to God. The climax of the pilgrimage was over. The departing whirlwind had borne with it the sins of three hundred thousand souls.

The great multitude began to stream back across the plain. Chale stood apart and watched them go. His spirit was tranquil and appeased. Other ceremonies lay ahead, and they still had to visit the tomb of Mohammed at Medina, the second holy city of Arabia. Then he would see Munirah safely back to her own country. His choice of her had been justified; she had been brave, uncomplaining, gentle, and when need arose, most wise. She had grown dearer to him than he could have believed. They would part in peace, with affection and respect, and she would return to Sarawak with the venerated title of *Haja*, to show that she had been on the pilgrimage. For himself, now that the climax of the pilgrimage was over, he felt at the beginning of a new life rather than at a journey's end. All his anxieties, his sacrifices, his tribulations were as nothing. By his struggle against adversity he had fulfilled himself, and by attaining his purpose he had achieved a spiritual victory which would sustain him all his life.

# TRAGEDY ON LOST WORLD PLATEAU

*By*

HUGH BROADBRIDGE

**A**N air liner goes from point to point on schedule—and it is routine. It crashes dreadfully—stark, sudden tragedy, but short-lived. When it fails to arrive at its destination without explanation, the whole world hushes and waits for news.

Anything may have happened, a forced landing in the wilds, safety after peril, silent and awful disaster. All is supposition till the day when the newspapers carry headlines telling of joy, sadness, anxiety or heroism. The air crash in Australia on February 19, 1937, combined them all.

On that day, the Stinson monoplane V-UHH, of Australian Air Lines, took off for the scheduled flight from Brisbane to Sydney, calling at Rockhampton and Archerfield. After picking up passengers at the latter place, it vanished from human knowledge for nine long days. The weather was fine, though incoming pilots had reported cloud on the hills and dirty-looking weather along the coast. The conditions were ripe for a cyclone.

There followed the greatest search in the history of Australian aviation. Misleading information and empty stories badly handicapped the searchers. On the morning after the plane disappeared, it was reported as having been seen near Newcastle. Ten airplanes combed the area for nothing. Wreckage washed ashore at Palm Beach was said to be that of the lost Stinson, but it was not.

Reports persisted from the Broken Bay area, near Newcastle, fishermen assuring the world that the red-tailed monoplane had been seen fighting a cyclone on the seaboard, after which it had vanished. When the weather cleared on Sunday, February 21, twenty-eight airplanes flew over every foot of the territory for fifty miles inland and far out to sea. Their fruitless efforts almost brought hope to an end. It was reluctantly assumed that the air liner had been blown out to sea and, crashing there, had gone to an unknown grave.

"Eye witnesses," however, still sent in reports. For the first time, it was said on the Monday that the air liner had reached a

point only twenty miles from Sydney. The captain of a ship was sure he had seen it flying into the storm at Barrenjoey. When this story proved baseless, a new whisper came from the Hawkesbury River. Once more, search disclosed nothing at all.

Tuesday saw a new aerial survey of the mountains between Wingham and Wollanda, where a shining object had been seen far away. People living in the district said a plane had been seen nearby on the fateful Friday. This and many similar stories began from the adventures of a Royal Air Force machine which got lost in the storm but reached its base safely.

The official search was abandoned on Wednesday, February 24, and with it went the hopes of nearly everybody in Australia and the world. An exception was Mrs. Proud, mother of a passenger who had boarded the liner at Archerfield and who unwaveringly believed in her boy's safety. She spurred a new search with a gift of £500, and the whole stretch of country each side of the air route was carefully examined, all to no purpose. The usual clues were provided and raised hopes only to dash them lower still.

On Saturday morning, when no fresh information had been received, when a reward offered by Australian Air Lines had availed nothing, hope was finally abandoned. The names of passengers and crew were sadly listed as dead and the sea was recognized as the sexton.

But, mercifully, it was not the end. From the disaster, two great tales of rescue emerge, one that succeeded gloriously, one that failed even more gloriously. The first really began on the day before hope had finally been given up.

Just north of the New South Wales border is the grim, wild beauty of the Queensland National Park. It is heavily timbered, almost without trails and is a high plateau riven by jungle-clad gorges. The highest point is four thousand feet above the sea, at the end of the Macpherson Range, where the plateau breaks off abruptly and the blue foothills slope into New South Wales. Widely-scattered farms reach to the edges of the uplands and there are a few resorts to which trails have been made for tourists. But that is all. The rest is savage wilderness and will probably remain so for all time.

In this primeval land, Bernard O'Reilly, a grazier, had carved himself a holding and had constructed a small guest-house known far and wide as the National Park Hostel. There he lived with his family and to him came the first scraps of information about the disappearance of the air liner all of which pointed to the same



end. The way he acted upon them was his idea alone and only a superb bushman and a man of courage and tenacity could have carried it out.

He had listened each day to the radio reports with hardly more than the average man's regret, except that the fact that the liner's route lay near to the Macpherson Range gave him a slightly more personal interest. Even when a neighbour in Kerry told him on February 21 that she had seen a plane flying towards the mountains, he thought no more about it. There had been so many stories like that.

But, a week after the Stinson vanished, his brother, who also lived in the nearby township of Kerry, told him exactly the same thing. On the following day, a friend corroborated the facts. For the first time, Bernard O'Reilly began to think that the missing air liner might not have got over the Macpherson Mountains. He knew the peaks, their treacherous air currents and shifting cloud-banks. He knew that an aeroplane, flying, as he was told, far too low for its position and flying into cloud, could never have lifted to clear the tree-clad heights. And the ravines were too narrow for it to go through. It was likely that the cyclone roaring over the crests had forced the plane down until it ploughed into the trees and smashed to pieces on the grey cliffs. There was no place for a safe forced landing for many miles.

He resolved at once to search so far as was possible, well aware that the trackless country would limit his range and exhaust him quickly. Trusting himself and feeling that companions would only slow his progress, he collected rations for a week and rode into the foothills until the track petered out. After that, he covered five painful miles through jungles of cane and along dripping gorges that hug the border of New South Wales. His knowledge of the country enabled him to guess roughly the line an airplane in distress must take if confronted by the plateau.

Blanketless and alone, he camped in the hills for the night, ready to begin on the hardest part of the job in the morning. Dawn brought him keen incentive and full daylight a great reward. Gazing out from a vantage point over the limitless ranges of peaks standing grimly one behind the other, he saw, far away and high on a wooded mountainside, a patch of brown in the living green. It could be caused only by one thing—fire. And fire in that lonely place and in that isolated patch, after wet weather, could be the result only of lightning or petrol. He was almost certain that it would prove to be the air liner, but rising gladness at the discovery

was checked by the dead brown leaves of that ominous circle. Fire after an air crash rarely leaves survivors, and the liner had been missing for nine awful days.

Bernard O'Reilly began his climb. The sticky heat made him sweat profusely and, on the dampness, stuck dust and dirt from the age-old leaf-mould of the ground and smears from tangling vines. Branches whipped him as he forced his way ever upwards and red weals showed on his skin. Hacking and tearing and climbing, his tough clothing shredded by thorns, irritated by flies and bitten by pests of every description, he fought his way. Cliffs were hidden in the green twilight of the deadly woods, so that every clawing step had to be tested; the farther side of every bush might be a precipice.

He swung on vines with no ground beneath him and leaped to sustaining branches when, time and again, he was near to stepping on nothing at all. Always the fearful, clammy jungle rose at him, always he struck back at it, winning along untrodden ways a yard at a time. He was completely determined to win.

When he was still two thousand feet below the brown patch in the trees, O'Reilly was suddenly and tragically made aware that he was on the right track. He came all at once into a tiny clearing. Sitting there, in the dim, green light, and in a pose so natural that he thought him alive, was a man. He sat on a great boulder, back resting against a tree, as though easing himself after a strenuous trek. O'Reilly was so taken by surprise that he spoke to him, but the man's terrible injuries showed him the truth before a reply could have been given. In death, he was almost alive. His name will certainly live.

O'Reilly left the body as it was and, able to do nothing for the dead, but hoping again now to find survivors, went on with his journey. Jungle and cliff claimed him once more and he clambered successfully upwards till he was in hailing distance of the burnt trees. Pausing, he took breath and gave a ringing *coo-oo-oo-eeh*, the cry that carries for miles through Australian bush country.

He repeated it at intervals, climbing ever nearer to the scorched greenery, and, at last, almost overwhelmingly, there came a faint reply. A man lived up there, perhaps more than one. His muscles responded to his lifting heart and brought him more swiftly up through the last mazed yards of scrub. He entered then a great opening in the trees made by crash and fire.

At the foot of a giant tree and in front of the stumps of two other trunks cut by its fall, lay the air liner. The smooth, shining

fabric had gone. Only the propellers gleamed in the tangle of blackened wreckage. Pieces lay around for many yards, ripped off by boughs that had barred, for an instant only, the plunging weight. Charred wood and the pallid ash of leaves was heaped in a circle. But for the wet weather, there might have been a raging bush fire that would have trapped any survivors more mercilessly than the crashing plane.

Many yards away, where they had painfully crawled from the blazing wreck, lay two men. They identified themselves as J. S. Proud and J. R. Binstead. Both were weak and ill from shock, exposure and starvation and one of Proud's legs was smashed, the splintered bone protruding through the flesh, a focus-point for flies. Weary days of pain had brought him to his last reserves of strength, while Binstead was physically exhausted by his daily journey of two hundred yards to fetch water from Christmas Creek, a journey that took him five hours each time.

O'Reilly made them tea and gave them his remaining food in small portions. He did what he could to ease Proud's agony. While that was being done, he became the first person to hear the story of the liner's crash. He saw the unique, heroic diary which Proud had scratched on a piece of metal from the shattered plane.

The first entry was:

"On Friday the plane crashed on the hillside at 1.50 p.m. Trees could plainly be seen before the crash, about fifty feet from the starboard window.

"Plane had a heavy list to starboard, and immediately crashed. Got to the ground somehow or other, and it burst into flames. Cabin filled with black smoke."

He mentioned briefly that he had been the first to get out, by smashing the window on the port side. He then lay on the wing and pulled out Binstead who, in turn, helped out J. G. Westray, a young Englishman who was badly burned on the back and hands. Nothing could be done for the other four men in the plane. They had not moved after the impact and now were lost in a hell of flame.

The rest of the diary was brief indeed. There was no word of the pyre that roared to heaven on that lonely hillside, no word of his own awful pain. There were but four more entries:

"When Westray got out he was suffering from burns to the back. The heat was so great we had to get clear of the plane. Rained like hell. We kept fire up all night and rain petered out next morning.

"Saturday, 20th, morning. Weather has cleared. Englishman left seeking assistance. Sang out he could see farmhouse. Did not return."

The tragedy behind that "did not return!"

"Away long time," the diary ended. "Nothing done. Do not know why search is not made." And, last of all. "Today hope is dwindling."

Those final words had hardly been scratched on the blackened metal when O'Reilly's call came through the trees and joy made them answer so weakly.

O'Reilly left them directly he had done all in his power to comfort them. Rescue could not be done by one man and Proud was in desperate need of a doctor. Feverish with impatience to bring back adequate help, O'Reilly tore his way back through the pest-ridden hush while the clouds sank lower on the grim hills and turned the eerie light of the woods to a green darkness. In the ominous silence of the mountains, the crash and tear of his passing sounded thunderous and stones he kicked over hidden cliffs echoed a dozen times.

But nothing could stop him now. He took risks in striving for more speed and found them justified. Hours afterwards, utterly worn out, clothing torn and filthy, he reached the Upper Brisbane Creek. Here he borrowed a horse and rode like a madman along the black soil track till he was able to change it for a motor truck. At Lamington, he came to the end of the telephone wire and gave his news to the world. With that, the first of the rescue stories ends. Bernard O'Reilly had done his job, and done it magnificently. He had pitted his skill in the bush against one of the wildest, toughest stretches of country in Australia for the sake of an idea and to save life if it was there to be saved. The idea and its proof were both inspired. Two men were to be given back to the world, a mystery cleared up, joy and sadness to be unloosed. The whole world knew at last. And anything was better than not knowing.

Probably only a man with O'Reilly's peculiar knowledge of the Lamington Plateau could have succeeded. One of the most renowned air searchers in Australia flew over the spot only a hundred feet above the trees and completely failed to see the wreck. It was O'Reilly's instant reading of the meaning of that brown patch in the scrub that had been vital. The rest had been courage and endurance.

Before coming to Westray's bid for rescue, the story of the

bringing down of Proud and Binstead deserves to be told. It is an epic in itself.

Doctor Lawlor, of Hillview, with three brothers named Shepherd, left that night to join up with O'Reilly who, without a pause, turned back to do that appalling climb once more. The doctor took everything necessary for amputating Proud's leg, but no anæsthetist could be found. Stretchers were taken and the whole company armed itself with brush hooks and axes to carve a wide enough passage through the scrub. Other parties started from different points. Every man who could get there would be needed to take his turn at stretcher-bearing.

Dawn brought rain and low clouds so that the forest dripped drearily on the parties and the going became more dangerous than ever owing to the slippery ground. Nothing, however, checked the rescue. They found Proud and Binstead wet and miserable but strengthened a little by the food O'Reilly had left them.

Proud's splintered leg had been badly infected by flies but Doctor Lawlor believed he might save it. Splints were cut from the bush and the leg was set for the arduous descent, a far more difficult feat than the climb up to the wreck. It is worth recording to show the appalling nature of the country, that of eighty people who started with various rescue parties, only thirty-five managed to get through. A prodigious exploit was accomplished by the proprietor of a Brisbane hotel who was so keen that he began his journey in a light tropical suit and bedroom slippers. Despite that, he finished with the first group with his trousers torn to ribbons, soaked with mud, feet badly cut but still keen.

A heroine of the party was an old mare named Jinny whose load back carried rations for all. She made the grade like a chamois, sometimes with three shaggy fetlocks in space but always with the vital one on firm ground.

Though they had left at dawn, night caught the rescuers before they could start back. It rained hard again and the bitter cold of the heights forced them to make camp and shelter the two survivors. One of the members went on alone to arrange for ambulances at the nearest point on a road.

The descent repeated the tale of strenuous work, except that it was magnified many times now by the carriage of two heavy stretchers. Many hours later, the job was done and Proud and Binstead lay comfortably in hospital, safe, sound and warm after many days. Bernard O'Reilly's triumph was complete.

But while Australia and the world paid tribute, the men who

had died in the plane and the man who had died trying to find help were also remembered. When the story of Westray's incredible climb was read from his tracks, his name rang across five continents. Since Captain Oates walked out into the Antarctic blizzard, no deed of personal sacrifice such as this had brightened the pages of history.

Proud's diary told how Westray left the scene of the crash and how he had cried out that he could see a farm. So he undoubtedly could, but he was more than three thousand feet above it, three thousand feet of nightmare country to which he was an utter stranger. That must be remembered. J. G. Westray was a London business man, not a bushman. He could not have had the slightest idea what was involved in trying to reach that farm. When he found out, he went on just the same. But the odds were far too great.

He was very badly burned on the back and his hands were scorched so that they must have given him agony every time he used them. And that meant every foot of the way down. Even O'Reilly, a skilled bushman and in the pink of condition, had saved his life by his hands many times on his rescue climb.

Men in the rescue parties, men who were used to rough travelling, swore that not for any price would they do that journey again. Yet Westray tackled it when seriously injured, and nearly, so very nearly, succeeded.

He crossed a stream, wading knee and waist deep, clambered over slippery, moss-grown boulders, hung on vines, forced his way without knife or axe through fearful scrub. Fallen trees, pests, flies and the steamy warmth gave him hell and slowly began to reduce his strength. He bled from a score of cuts and scratches, he fell down the sides of narrow chasms where waterfalls tore crazily through the skin of the mountains, but always he rose again to go on. Always, too, he was that much weaker after every fall he survived and every obstacle he surmounted. Over and over again, his hands clutched a branch or rock to save himself and then were forced to open again by the pain from their burned skin. Each time that happened it meant a fall, often on to his injured back, with renewed agony. There is nothing so weakening as pain reiterated without end.

It could not possibly last, and yet the end was the most amazing feat of heroic obstinacy he exhibited in all that terrific climb.

Eyes dimmed by utter exhaustion, worn with the pain of his burned back and of more recent wounds, he fell twenty-five feet

over a hidden cliff on to jagged rocks below. In effect, that fall killed him, though the end was delayed. When, after a dreadful time, he rose from that terrible smash—and the miracle of it was that he rose at all—his wrist was broken, one eye was knocked out and his head was sorely injured. And still he went on. Wonderfully, amazingly, he went on.

Now he had to spend long minutes resting, clinging to any support the while. His ebbing life had nearly been shocked from him. He was, in fact, dying on his feet. The last reserves of strength had drained away. Only the indomitable will kept him upright. His body was almost dead but his mind was still on the job. It became a matter of minutes, then of how many more steps he could take. The moment came when a further inch was an impossibility. The torn and bloodstained body slumped on a rock, an incredible half-mile from where he had fallen over the cliff.

Even then he must have been hoping that a rest would let him recover a little. He took out his cigarette case, and, after lighting a cigarette, laid the case beside him on the rock.

Slowly and painfully, almost unconsciously, he smoked half that cigarette, till at length the hand that held it took it no more to his mouth. The cigarette went out half smoked and it stayed between his dead fingers just as his body remained sitting. That was why O'Reilly was startled into speaking to him when first he saw him there.

So J. G. Westray died, having given everything he had to bring help to his injured companions on a journey that took a skilled bush party more than two hours to do. It was a most glorious failure. It is unforgettable.

He was buried where he died and his grave will be kept fresh for ever. After the rescue on the heights above, parties of worn out men kept coming to the grave to stand there bareheaded and marvel at the deeds of that heroic man. The terse comment of one of them is perhaps his best epitaph: "He had guts with a capital G."

So ends the story of an air crash that thrilled the world with the mystery of its happening and the heroism that came out of it. The air lines go on. Engines throb again near the beautiful, deadly wilderness of Lost World Plateau. But tragedies that have happened are not forgotten. Good comes of them, not least the conduct of men who were in them. A very gallant gentleman lies sleeping in the Australian wilds, and he has not died in vain.

# DRAKE'S AMAZING VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD

*By*  
MICHAEL GEELAN

**S**ELDOM in history has a woman's hand rocked the cradle of great events with such subtlety, patience and purpose as in the case of Queen Elizabeth and her vagabond knight, Sir Francis Drake, that glamorous and intrepid sea-dog who was the first to sail an English ship around the world.

Elizabeth's royal favour was the mainspring of events which set in motion those dreams and aspirations which were eventually to make England the supreme sea power among the nations, dauntless and impregnable. Bravery and enterprise thrived on her generous inspiration. She stirred the hearts of men to action and adventure. They sharpened their swords on her enthusiasms and set their compasses by her ambitions. The queen was cunning and ruthless. She was avaricious, as willing and anxious as any to profit from plunder, slavery and conquest. But this sharp-featured, vain and crafty spinster daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn had this compensating virtue—that she believed with all her heart that England was as great a country as she was a queen.

Sir Francis Drake was a man after her own fashion. In Drake she saw reflected her own strength of purpose, her own disregard for scruples, her own greed for the sensation as well as the spoils of adventure and, above all else, her own desire that the might of Spain should be humbled and destroyed.

It was that world dominance of Spain that was the real inspiration of Drake's epic voyage. But for that country's power, and an abuse of it, he might well have lived his days as an obscure sea-captain, with no place in history's romantic story. As it was, Spanish arrogance and treachery led to his becoming a vivid figure in the gallery of his country's immortals—pirate, explorer, devastating sea fighter and national idol.

It is difficult to realize that when Drake first put to sea as a young man Spain was an indomitable world power, proud, spectacular and frightening. Not since the days of the Roman Empire had any nation achieved such dominance. The authority



of King Philip II embraced both Spain and Portugal, as well as many of the most prosperous parts of Italy. Flanders and the Low Countries were his playthings. He had a stranglehold on trade. Between them Spain and Portugal filled their galleons with the fabulous treasures of the New World. Foreign shipping was scorned, and was in constant jeopardy on the high seas. The Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian oceans were the private "lakes" of these two countries. To Philip of Spain the Pope had actually promised the kingdom and crown of England!

Religious intolerance was rampant in Europe. And strongest among the puppets of the Pope was King Philip, who was indefatigable in preserving and spreading the Roman Catholic faith. Against him the reformers were more often than not impotent. As for Elizabeth who had been brave enough to reject an offer of marriage from the Spanish monarch, she was cautious not to incur the too drastic wrath of Philip until such time as the odds were less hazardous. Indeed her statecraft—or scheming—in this direction was brilliant. With every under-breath she cursed the Spaniards, yet with gentle words diverted their anger when the more gallant of her sailors resorted to open piracy on the high seas at the expense of the haughty Dons. She could not risk open warfare. For, to give them their due, the Spaniards were brave, resourceful and superbly equipped.

But through the years Elizabeth nursed her enmity. She was a fountain of subversive propaganda. There was growing up in England, she knew intuitively, a quiet strength, a surge of superiority, a restless craving for adventure and expansion, a breed of supermen all of which would be a match for the might of Spain. The plundering of Spanish ships and the running of the trade blockades gave her evident satisfaction. Such acts were the growing-pains of a new imperialism. Not for long now could the New World be kept closed to the new and awakened England.

The hour produced the men—gallant and competent—not least among whom was Drake. He was born in obscurity—between 1543 and 1545. One of a family of twelve children. Drake had early evidence of the cruel and intolerant age into which he had been born. Because of religious persecution his father, a Devonshire man, was forced to flee from his native county to the coast of Kent, where he became official preacher to the navy at Chatham. He did not fail to inoculate young Drake with his own frenzy of faith, so much so that in future years the great man more than

once linked himself flatteringly with the Deity, and smugly reconciled his toughest exploits with divine providence. It did not worry him that, as "instrument of God" his deeds would scarcely bear the scrutiny of the law.

A brief survey of Drake's early career is an essential prelude to the story of his world voyage, as it is indicative of the shaping of his character and the birth of the motives which impelled him to set out upon that adventure. He was a lad of about fourteen years when he first went to sea, not because of any inborn maritime impulse, not because of any inbred hatred of the Spaniards, but for the simple reason that his father could no longer afford to support him. Nevertheless, as apprentice aboard a small, coasting, trading barque, he displayed an immediate genius for seamanship. The salt water got into his blood. He worked hard. He was amenable to discipline. In emergency he showed initiative. Physically, he was hard and strong; mentally alert and receptive. With remarkable facility he acquired a splendid knowledge of winds and tides, shoals and currents. So much so that, when still a boy he could navigate the English Channel with ease. His reward came when the owner of the barque died, leaving the tiny vessel to Drake.

In 1567 Drake was well acquainted with Captain John Hawkins, one of the greatest English seamen of his day, and one who enjoyed the sly admiration and surreptitious subsidy of Queen Elizabeth. Hawkins had a flair for trafficking in negro slaves, and the queen herself was undoubtedly not averse to sharing in his ill-gotten profits. When Hawkins planned a new voyage to the West Indies, Drake decided to join him. He was thirsty for adventure, and his conscience was in no manner affected by the thought of slave-trading. Permission obtained, he sold his trading barque, and with the proceeds purchased a small craft called the *Judith*. In October, 1567 the expedition sailed, a small convoy of seven vessels—timid and fragile craft to brave the tempestuous Atlantic—headed by Hawkins in the *Jesus of Lubeck* (ironic name for a slaving vessel), personally lent by Elizabeth.

At Cape Verde and along the coast of Guinea they succeeded in capturing several hundred unfortunate negroes, though they lost several men in the inevitable fighting. Then, with their human cargo, they set sail for the Spanish West Indies, disposing of as many slaves as they could *en route*. But disaster was impending. Foul weather drove the little fleet into the port of San Juan d'ulloa, in the Bay of Mexico. Here, to their chagrin, they found a number

of Spanish ships lying at anchor, and their apprehension increased with the appearance of a fleet of Spanish warships next morning.

Hawkins resorted to a desperate stroke of bluff. Calmly he suggested to the Spanish admiral that a treaty should be arrived at, whereby the English would permit the warships to enter the harbour if they (the English) could retain temporary possession of the port and its battery. The Spaniards agreed, signed the treaty, but proceeded to exhibit rank treachery. Having attained the harbour, they turned on the English in vindictive fury. They murdered those on shore, and captured the battery. Then, from the fortress and their own ships, they proceeded to shoot the little English fleet almost to pieces. Only two vessels survived—but they brought Hawkins and Drake safely back to England, to live and fight another day.

Drake never forgave the Spaniards for that act of blatant treachery. He was angry and bitter and revengeful. Thenceforth, for the rest of his life, he was determined to strike hard and often at those who had become, not only England's, but his own personal enemies. He would harass and plunder and destroy them. Yet little did he realize that eventually he was destined to sweep them from the seas, to see their proud Armada at the mercy of the English and the elements.

During the next ten years Drake was schooling himself for the great adventure that was to make English seamanship, courage and audacity renowned, and was to give Philip of Spain the first big scare of his reign. During that period he had his first glimpse of the Pacific, and resolved that he would follow in the wake of Magellan, would dare the dangerous passage through from the Atlantic. Meanwhile, he was content to plunder the Spaniards with cool deliberation. Not the least spectacular of his exploits was in 1572 when, with only two small ships and less than one hundred men, he attacked the city of Nombre de Dios, a vast treasure storehouse in which was kept the riches obtained by the Spaniards from Mexico and Peru until such time as they could be shipped to Europe and to Philip. More daring still, he ventured inland from Panama, surprising and capturing a mule train laden with gold and silver, pearls, rubies and diamonds. His return to Plymouth was a triumphant one.

Now Drake's star was rising fast. The queen had heard, of course, of his swashbuckling, and had applauded him in secret. Public recognition was completely out of the question, for Drake and his kind were purely private adventurers who could expect no

better fate than to be hanged from a yard-arm if they fell captive to the Spaniards. Still, such a man as Drake could not be ignored. Both the queen and court circles realized that he had potentialities of intense significance to England. He was a paragon among pirates. In him was a spark of patriotism that might well light the fires of a new nationalism. He was fearless and he had vision. And, above all he hated the Spaniards to the point of fanaticism.

Elizabeth decided that she must know him. This Drake should be the ambassador of her own ambitions, her loyal and unrelenting servant on the seas. Drake was summoned to the magnetic presence.

What manner of man did she meet? A strong, vigorous, dynamic personality, with a brooding self-assurance, eager and alert, impatient of obstacle and criticism, bluff of speech and heavy of movement, yet with a certain rough charm that women—among them Elizabeth—found captivating as well as picturesque. Like many great sailors since, he was not tall of stature, but his limbs were sturdy, and he had tremendous breadth of chest. Brown hair curled low on his forehead. A handsome beard rested on the fluted pleats of his ruff. Bright grey eyes glinted with character and resolve. His was "a well-favoured face, and of cheerful countenance."

The men who served under him were devoted to this unique adventurer, for he had an infinite capacity for leadership. He posed and strutted in many an orgy of self-aggrandisement, thirsted for applause and flattery, could rave and swear in torrents of salted oaths, despised weakness and vacillation, never forgave an insult or an injury. But he was gay and comradely, sparkling with vitality. He never shirked his share either of work or danger, and he could invest even the commonplace with the colour of romance and drama. His men knew that his stern sense of duty and discipline was smoothed by the warmth of humanity and justice. Kindliness came naturally to him. Even when he realized to the full the abominable tortures inflicted by the Spaniards upon their captives, he continued to treat his own prisoners with a consideration that was foreign to the times.

The penetrative mind of Queen Elizabeth was quick to grasp the fact that Drake was thinking and planning on a big and breathless scale. He was determined that the impending voyage should satisfy even his prodigious appetite for adventure, though he had then no intention of circling the globe. The peak of his ambition at that time was to sail through the Strait of Magellan

(as he had resolved to do years before) and, once in the Pacific, to plunder the Spanish treasure ships as they had never been plundered before. And just to trim this rank piracy and private warfare with at least one feeble frill of authentic exploration, he allowed it to be whispered that he might found colonies in any suitable lands. It was delightful bluff that deceived scarcely anyone, Elizabeth in particular. All that she cared about was that the King of Spain's beard should be well and truly singed, and that the royal share of the loot would be very gratifying.

Drake's expedition was eventually financed by a syndicate. The queen herself was a prominent, if secret, shareholder, investing a thousand crowns from her own tight pocket, and promising naval assistance. So high was Drake's prestige in the country, and so glowing the new spirit of adventure, that eager volunteers were available from both London and Plymouth. In addition to seamen, a corps of gentlemen adventurers was enlisted for operations on land.

By November, 1577, Drake was ready. Though his vessels would to-day seem incredibly small and precarious, his was the largest fleet of its kind that had ever left England on a "peaceful" errand. The flagship in which he sailed as admiral (or "general," as he was called then) was the *Pelican*—later to be re-christened the *Golden Hind*—a vessel of only a hundred and twenty tons and eighteen guns. Then there was the *Elizabeth*, of eighty tons and eighteen guns, commanded by Captain John Winter, with her pinnace, the *Benedict*; the *Marygold*, of thirty tons and sixteen guns, and a supply ship, the *Swan*, of fifty tons. Stored away in sections were a number of pinnaces, the usefulness of which Drake had proved on previous occasions. The man-power of the expedition was only one hundred and sixty-four "men, gentlemen and sailors." A formidable store of ammunition and arms, including even bows and arrows, was carried.

A peculiar friend of Drake's at this period was one Captain Thomas Doughty, a gentleman of position and culture, a great scholar, a lawyer of the Temple, and a man of professed religious convictions. He was, at the same time, a master of plot and subterfuge, revelling in intrigue. While pressing Drake's case for the expedition in exalted circles, he had undoubtedly been playing some mysterious sort of double game. Indeed, it was his perverse genius for double-dealing and his passion for crisis that, as later events will reveal, brought about his downfall and death. In the meantime, Drake was susceptible to the polished scoundrel's

charm and gift of flattery, and to him he extended a generous measure of friendship.

With his seaboots stumping once again on a ship's deck, Drake was in an ecstasy of good spirits. Inspired no doubt by the elegance of his friend Doughty, he planned to live in style and luxury while at sea. His cabin was appointed with furniture of the finest oak, which is still to be seen in Berkeley Castle. Even the vessels in the ship's galley were of pure silver. There were fiddlers to match his moods with music, and a page to stand behind his chair. And with him round the world was to go, of course, his renowned drum—the beat of which pulsates in history.

On the eve of the voyage there were ugly rumours that Doughty had betrayed the secret of the expedition to the Spanish Party in England (Drake's destination having been publicly declared to be Alexandria), and that it was his intention to engineer mutiny and Drake's death when the fleet had put to sea. Such stories could not help reaching the ears of the great man himself, but such was his confidence in Doughty that he laughed them aside. Not yet was he to discover the black treachery and ingratitude of his aristocratic friend.

On November 15, 1577, the expedition sailed out of Plymouth Sound, but on the second day a howling gale gave the vessels such a wicked drubbing that they were forced to make a limping return to port. A second and more auspicious start was made on December 13, and when the coast of England had faded Drake proudly announced to the rank and file that he had no intention of making for Alexandria, but that his destination was the Pacific and his objective riches beyond their wildest dreams.

Making straight for the west coast of Morocco, Drake enlivened the monotony by seizing several valuable prizes, one of which he added to his fleet, with Doughty in command. They made a fast run across the Bay of Biscay and down the west African coast to the Cape de Verde Islands. There, taking up the north-east trades, they struck across the Atlantic, crossed the Equator, and made Brazil, on the South American continent, after being out of sight of land for fifty-four days.

By June 20, 1578, they had reached Port St. Julian, on the coast of Patagonia, south of Argentina, where they were to spend part of the southern winter before embarking on the more exciting and hazardous part of their adventure. Magellan, the renowned Portuguese explorer, had quelled a dangerous mutiny at St. Julian nearly sixty years before, on the eve of penetrating the strait which

bears his name to the Pacific. Now, after all these years, Drake was to be the first to follow in his wake—and was to win even greater glory.

Drake's welcome to the harbour of St. Julian was a sinister one. High on a rotting gallows he saw hanging a human skeleton, picked clean by the vultures and bleached by the sun and rain many a long year ago. It was all that remained to tell of the Magellan mutiny. And now Drake, in his turn, was to make this place the journey's end of treachery. For it was here that Thomas Doughty was to die.

The first six months of the voyage had revealed the plotter in his true colours. Not content with having betrayed Drake ashore he now conspired to harass him afloat. Still dazzled by the man's brilliant personality, still feeling for him a warm if reluctant friendship, Drake remained blind much longer than common sense demanded to Doughty's evil machinations. But the evidence against him assumed staggering proportions. When placed in command of a prize ship he was guilty of pilfering its treasure. He had attempted to bribe and corrupt one of Drake's captains. In the temporary absence of Drake from the *Pelican* he had talked sedition to the gentlemen adventurers of the expedition, had both swaggered and bragged, insisting that he as well as Drake had been invested with the power of life and death by the queen, hinting that he possessed some startling evidence to the discredit of their leader.

Nor was this all. Doughty made the fatal blunder of blaming Drake's own brother Thomas—who was a member of the expedition—for his own acts of dishonesty on the prize vessel. Drake was incensed. His reluctance to believe the worst of Doughty was transformed into bitter condemnation. Not only did he believe him to be a thief and a traitor, but he was convinced also that both Doughty and his brother John (also on the voyage) were guilty of black magic.

In those days, of course, even the church recognized the existence of witchcraft. It was only natural, when told that the two men had boasted of being adept at evil practices, that Drake should believe this to be true. He was certain that they were in league with the devil, that the safety and success of the expedition were being imperilled. Never in his long experience had he known such weather as they had so far experienced. They had encountered unique belts of storm, and fits and starts of contrary winds had becalmed them for exceptional periods.

The tension became acute. Doughty was given no more chances. On one occasion, when he dared to challenge Drake's supreme authority, that sturdy sea-dog buried the man's blusterings beneath a torrent of oaths, felled him to the deck and ordered him to be pilloried at the mast. Finally, both brothers were placed under arrest. Addressing his men, Drake declared that Thomas was "a conjurer and a seditious fellow"; that John was "a witch and a poisoner." The latter he was inclined to treat with contempt, but Thomas Doughty he was determined to bring for trial. Sedition had to be stamped out.

The trial—one of the most remarkable in history—took place ashore at St. Julian, despite Doughty's protest that he should face his judge at home in England. Drake's entire company was assembled, and a jury of forty empanelled. The indictment was as follows: "Thomas Doughty, you have sought by divers means, inasmuch as you may, to discredit me to the great hindrance and overthrow of this voyage, besides other great matters which I have to charge you, the which, if you clear yourself withal, you and I shall be very great friends, whereto the contrary, you have deserved death."

The evidence against him was strong, circumstantial and convincing. It left no shadow of doubt. Words were Doughty's only defence, and his eloquence led him only deeper into the quicksands of guilt. Cross-examined by Drake, he even confessed that, before leaving England, he had betrayed the secret of the voyage to Lord Burleigh, the Lord Treasurer, whom the queen herself was anxious should be kept in ignorance because of his known antagonism towards such projects. But he was not tried on this issue; neither was the question of witchcraft stressed. The charge was essentially one of mutinous conduct.

On that charge he was found guilty by a show of hands. The jury appears to have been unanimous. Certainly, with forty men to judge him, including at least two who had been his intimate friends, he was assured of justice. There may have been an ache in his heart, but there was no pity in his voice when Drake pronounced sentence of death, under the authority vested in him by the queen's commission. The execution was fixed for forty-eight hours hence.

It can be said for Doughty that he squared up in a manly way to the inevitable. His fortitude was amazing. So, too, was the drama of the last hours of his life. He was anxious to receive Holy Communion, and he and Drake knelt side by side to receive the



Holy Sacrament. Then they dined together as of old, joked, drank each other's health—the judge and the condemned! Doughty begged for a few moments with Drake in complete privacy. The request was granted, and it is believed that Doughty then made a complete confession, begging for the forgiveness of the man he had betrayed.

An eyewitness, believed to have been Thomas Drake, says this of the final scene: "Mr. Doughty came forth and kneeled down, preparing at once his neck for the axe, and his spirit for heaven, which having done, without long ceremony, as one who had before digested the whole tragedy, he desired all the rest to pray for him, and willed the executioner to do his office, not to fear nor spare."

The fallen head was lifted for the company of adventurers to see. And there was iron in Drake at that moment. "Lo! this is the end of traitors!" he said.

The fleet remained at St. Julian throughout the southern mid-winter. With the death of Doughty the danger of unrest and possibly mutiny had been finally averted, but Drake, thorough and forthright as always, was determined to sail again only with a company that was a hundred per cent amenable to discipline. He did not bargain. Nor did he threaten. His methods were entirely his own. While he knew quite well that there were others unworthy of either his trust or his confidence, he adhered to his resolve not to pursue enquiries further. Instead, with almost uncanny genius, he commanded that all ranks should make their confession to the chaplain, and should receive the Sacrament!

Then he called his men together. He told the chaplain that he had a sermon to preach—and preach it he did with studied benevolence, but with a sting in every whip-crack of his eloquence. No mention was made of Doughty. He declared, however, that there were others deserving of punishment, but that the past would be forgotten. In the future there must be fellowship and understanding between all ranks. "The gentlemen must haul and draw with the mariner, and the mariner with the gentlemen." Those who might resent these terms could, if they so wished, return home immediately in the *Marygold*. But there must be no delay. "If I find them in my way I will surely sink them," he thundered. None accepted his offer. The loyal were inspired by his just and noble attitude; the dissatisfied were shamed into silence. The whole of his officers, whom he had temporarily relegated to the ranks, were reinstated, a final appeal made to the

courage and patriotism of the entire company, and the stage was set for the second part of the great adventure.

They set sail from St. Julian on August 17, 1578, the fleet now reduced to three ships—the *Pelican*, the *Marygold* and the *Elizabeth*—the remaining vessels having been burnt or abandoned as unseaworthy. Three days' sailing brought them to the entrance of the Strait of Magellan.

It was a great moment for Drake. Only Ferdinand Magellan, the Portuguese explorer, had navigated this passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific before him. Magellan had experienced perils in that mysterious waterway, the story of which served only to add spice to Drake's forthcoming adventure. He knew that they might never emerge again into the open sea. His fleet was smaller even than Magellan's, and the fury of the tempest might dash his frail craft to destruction against the forest of rocks within. It is doubtful if he had a chart. If he did, it would have been far from dependable.

As they approached the towering cliffs that canopied the entrance to the mystic corridor—the gateway of Drake's dreams—he exalted in the thrill and grandeur and romance of his adventure. The ships were ordered to strike their topsails in honour of the queen, prayers were said, and in further celebration he changed the name of his own immortal flagship from the *Pelican* to the *Golden Hind*, the Golden Hind being the crest of Sir Christopher Hatton, Elizabeth's particular favourite of the moment.

The passage through the strait occupied sixteen days. Sixteen days of excitement and wonder that were not unmixed with fear and anxiety. Haltingly they groped along, winding their way around the rocks amid cold and ever-changing squalls, as though in some mystic and awe-inspiring maze. Their frosted breath came faster as they gazed at the snow-capped mountains that seemed to crowd down upon them with the threat and power of desolate majesty. Everything around them was wild, primitive, spell-binding. Occasionally, to the north, they could see the fires of native tribes.

Drake landed his men on at least one island in the strait to christen it in the name of the queen. Here they found a "great store of fowl which could not fly, of the bigness of geese; whereof we killed in less than one day three thousand, and victualled ourselves thoroughly therewith." These were, of course, penguins.

It had been Drake's belief that, once through the strait, he

could hasten north into warmer and calmer latitudes, but he was doomed to drastic disappointment. The Pacific at once proceeded to belie the gentility of its name. Drake had never seen or ridden such a sea; its fury was incredible. Helpless before the gale the ships were driven six hundred miles to the south-east outside the dreaded Horn, where the waves are the highest and most perpetual in the world. Where Drake had anticipated land there was boundless ocean.

Here was adventure with a vengeance. Drake was not exactly lost, but the place where he expected to be did not exist! There *was* no continent to the south of the Horn, but wild, tempestuous waters that might be his grave.

The *Marygold* foundered in the storm that drove the *Golden Hind* south. Captain Winter, in the *Elizabeth*, survived the elements and battled his way back into the shelter of the Magellan Strait. Here the *Elizabeth* remained for three weeks, lighting fires at night in the hope that Drake would see the signal and return. Winter knew perfectly well that his orders were that, if the ships became separated, he was to re-join Drake at Valparaiso, in Chile, but at the end of the three weeks he sailed for England instead. It may have been cowardice. What is more likely, however, is that he took this opportunity of repaying the grudge he bore against Drake. There is no evidence that he, too, was a traitor, but he had undoubtedly been one of Doughty's sympathizers.

The *Golden Hind* took refuge among the islands which formed the Cape, calling them the "Elizabethides" and setting up a stone monument in honour of the queen. With no opportunity of piracy at hand, he was very much the patriot. While waiting for the spring and smoother weather, Drake occupied his time in making surveys, day-dreaming of the adventures still in store, and studying the native Patagonians, whose hardiness in going naked amid the ice and snow won his unstinted admiration.

In October, 1578, Drake set his course for Valparaiso, where he still believed that Winter would keep their rendezvous, little realizing that the *Marygold* lay on the ocean bed and that the *Elizabeth* was speeding home to England with the false news that Drake's drum was probably silent for ever. On the way, while the *Golden Hind* was watering at an island, Drake was wounded by the arrows of hostile natives, one striking him below the eye, and his escape from death was a narrow one.

But the promise of rich and abundant loot at Valparaiso, and the reunion of his ships, was like a magic tonic to the dauntless

sea-dog. His first anticipation was certainly realized. Riding at anchor, with less than a dozen crew aboard, was a magnificent Spanish vessel, ready to sail with its treasures to Panama. Believing the little *Golden Hind* to be a Spanish ship, it drummed Drake a welcome, inviting him aboard for refreshment. A boarding party was sent, with the inevitable result. It was a handsome prize, yielding gold to the value of £8,000 and nearly two thousand jars of wine. Then, going ashore, he robbed the church of a chalice, two cruets and an altar cloth, all of which he gallantly handed over to his own chaplain for use at Communion on the *Golden Hind*.

Drake spent the December of 1578 in questing along the coast for his lost ships, finally abandoning hope, or at least interest. He was not at all awed by the fact that here he was alone in the Pacific, with only the little *Golden Hind* and a handful of Englishmen with which to challenge and bewilder the might of Spain. If anything, he revelled in the added danger. He was as unwilling to go back as Winter had been to go forward. The spirit of risk and adventure surged and bubbled in his breast. This and his hunger for plunder and his hatred of Spain rose high above any thought of fear. Gay, audacious, iron-jawed in his determination, he was ready for anything—as pirate or patriot.

Pending bigger things, he entertained and enriched himself by many lightning raids on the coast. On the quay at Tarapaca, where the silver from the Andes mines was shipped for Panama, he snatched bullion worth 4,000 ducats from under the noses of the sleeping guards. Nearby they discovered an Indian boy driving "eight llamas or sheep of Peru, which are as big as asses." Each carried a leather bag containing silver. The result was a haul of eight hundredweight of treasure. At Arica they plundered three small vessels, finding in one of them fifty-seven wedges of silver, each one of them weighing about twenty pounds.

One of the most daring and dazzling of Drake's achievements was the casual manner in which he dropped in at Callao, the port of Lima, from whence sailed many a golden argosy. A dozen ships or more lay at anchor, their crews ashore. Where Drake had expected to find a fortune he found only a few bales of silk and linen. His disappointment, however, was short-lived. From a frightened watchman he extracted the exciting news that the *Cacafuego*, a stately galleon laden with treasure of immense worth had sailed for Panama many days previously.

Drake was thrilled. This was big game. This was the

opportunity for which he had crossed the world. Now the King of Spain's beard should have the very devil of a singeing, and Drake himself should receive recompense for the treachery of the Spaniards who had broken their word at San Juan d'ulloa so many years before. With every inch of canvas spread, the *Golden Hind* sped in the direction of Panama in the wake of the *Cacafuego*. Only once did he break off from the chase, to relieve an unfortunate brigantine of eighty pounds of gold and a great golden crucifix set with huge emeralds.

The *Cacafuego* being eventually sighted, Drake waited until nightfall before pouncing on his victim. To attack it at all was a triumph of grit and imagination over realism. The treasure ship was a massive galleon, powerfully armed and manned by an extensive crew. The *Golden Hind* was a vessel of only one hundred and twenty tons, battered by the storms she had ridden, her crew tired and few in number. No matter—Drake's drum was beating in his heart! He brought the *Golden Hind* alongside his huge opponent, and with all the self-assurance in the world demanded the Spaniard to strike sail and surrender to the English. His order rejected, he opened fire with his guns, and the enemy's mizzen was shot overboard. Then Drake with his boarders leaped on to the *Cacafuego's* deck. The Spaniards hypnotized into helplessness by the shock of finding the English in the Pacific, offered little resistance, and struck their flag. With a prize crew aboard, the *Cacafuego* then accompanied the *Golden Hind* well out to sea.

This was indeed a capture. At daybreak, when he inspected the treasure, even Drake's hardened eyes must have been dazzled by its immensity and splendour. The plunder included twenty tons of silver bullion, thirteen chests of silver coins, a hundred-weight of gold, and a great store of pearls, emeralds and diamonds. Its actual worth was a secret well preserved by Drake and Elizabeth, but one modest estimate was £100,000.

Drake again set his course for the north, taking the prize with him. Its commander, San Juan de Anton, who had been slightly wounded during the capture, came aboard the *Golden Hind* for medical treatment, and remained for a week as Drake's guest. The two dined together and became quite friendly. Drake told the Spaniard the whole story of his adventures. He emphasized the fact that he had been robbed at San Juan d'ulloa and was now, long afterwards, making good his losses and, at the same time, serving his queen. To the Viceroy of Mexico, whom he blamed for the

## ESCAPE FROM AN ICE FLOE



### STEADFAST ENDURANCE AND A BRILLIANT EXPLOIT

(Top left) Professor Otto Schmidt, leader of the "Chelyuskin" expedition (Top right) V. S. Molokov, the brilliant aviator rescuer, and (bottom) dogs of the "Chelyuskin" expedition.

## THE LONE CLIMBER OF EVEREST



### EVEREST UNCONQUERED

*No man's foot is known to have reached the summit of Everest. But one man unaided attempted to achieve the apparently impossible feat.*

treacherous treatment of Hawkins and himself on that occasion, he sent the following fiery message, though he probably never meant a word of it: "Tell him he shall do well to put no more Englishmen to death, and to spare those he has in his hands, for if he do execute them I will hang two thousand Spaniards and send him their heads." The treasure having been safely transferred to the *Golden Hind*, San Juan de Anton and his men were allowed to sail off to freedom in the empty *Cacafuego*.

Now Drake began to think of home. He was rich in plunder, had played havoc with Spanish towns and shipping, and had shown the English flag in the Pacific for the first time. But *which* way home? It would be a false move to venture back through the Magellan Strait, where the enemy, enraged by his audacity, would be lying in wait to trap him. Thus left the westward route across the Pacific and by way of the Cape of Good Hope to Europe—thus girdling the world—or the unexplored North-West Passage. The latter held his imagination because it was the most mysterious and hazardous. It was another challenge to the unknown.

But Drake was not to discover the North-West Passage. He was beaten by contrary winds, useless charts and intense cold. At what is now San Francisco he took possession of California in the name of Queen Elizabeth, calling it New Albion. The natives regarded him as a god and made him their king, crowning him with a crown of feathers. Drake was more impressed, however, by the opportunity of overhauling his ship in peaceful surroundings. The *Golden Hind* was a-leak, and her bottom was infested by barnacles and sea-worms. Forge and workshop were set up, the repairs taking well over a month. It was not until mid-summer in 1579 that the ship was ready for sea again.

The *Golden Hind* penetrated as far north as Vancouver, but Drake was rapidly losing hope of ever discovering the elusive passage. What is more, he was anxious not to risk the discontent of his men. So, reluctantly, he decided on the Cape of Good Hope route—and, thus, on the circumnavigation. For his course he would rely upon a chart which he had found in a captured vessel, and upon his own initiative and good fortune.

Drake avoided the route from Mexico to the Philippines, preferring solitude and uncertainty to the danger of being chased and perhaps defeated by the Spaniards at the eleventh hour. Two months of lonely sailing brought the *Golden Hind* to what is now believed to have been the Pelew Islands, where Drake was treated to a comical dose of his own medicine. Anxious to trade with the



inhabitants for provisions, he loaded their little boats with gifts, but when the natives returned they brought with them only stones, with which they proceeded to pelt the *Golden Hind*. There was nothing for Drake to do but drive them off with gunfire and leave what he called the "Isles of Thieves" in disgust. A fortnight later they had reached the Moluccas, the *Golden Hind* being once again docked and scraped at the Island of Celebes.

Celebes behind him, Drake faced what was actually the most perilous part of the entire voyage, the navigation of coral reefs and low islands scarcely visible above the water-line. On January 9, 1580, a significant grating sound was heard under the *Golden Hind's* keel. She had struck a rock on which she remained firmly wedged all through the long night. But for a light breeze and smooth water no more would ever have been heard of Francis Drake and his treasure ship. At the first streak of dawn Drake resorted to a desperate remedy. He decided to lighten the ship. Eight guns, three tons of cloves, and a quantity of meal and beans were cast overboard. With the turn of the tide the *Golden Hind* slipped once again into deep water.

During that crisis, although hearts were heavy, the ship's company had behaved fairly well, with the exception of Mr. Fletcher, the chaplain, who apparently whined about divine retribution for the death of Doughty. For the time being Drake ignored Fletcher's cowardly conduct, but when he had located Java and the *Golden Hind* was sailing proudly and freely through the Sunda Straits he decided to teach the parson a lesson he would remember. The incident that followed was one of the most incredible of the entire voyage. Whether Drake was playing with the man or whether his anger had outstripped his judgment, it is impossible to say. The facts must speak for themselves.

Assembling the ship's company, and ordering the chaplain to be padlocked by the leg to the forehatches, Drake sat cross-legged on a sea-chest in all his piratical majesty. Then he fixed a fearsome eye on the cringing parson. "Francis Fletcher," he thundered, "I do here excommunicate thee out of the Church of God and from all benefits and graces thereof and I denounce thee to the devil and all his angels." Further, he ordered that if Fletcher appeared on the fore-deck he was to be hanged, and that around his arm he was to wear a badge bearing the inscription, "Francis Fletcher, the falsest knave that liveth."

This was Drake at his richest and best. He himself probably enjoyed every moment of it. From the queen's commission he

had extracted every ounce of power, assuming not only that of life and death but absolute authority on behalf of the Church of England.

Thus was Fletcher left to repent of his attempt to discourage the men at an hour of crisis, fully deserving of the fright that this fantastic sentence must have given him. For him the voyage had been clerically most disturbing, from being given stolen vessels for his Holy Communion, to being excommunicated by a pirate on the high seas. He was not kept long in jeopardy, however, for in a few days Drake announced both his release and his "absolution."

Before they left Java in February, 1580, they had been royally entertained by numerous rajahs, who were lavish in their hospitality, dining and wining the adventurers to their heart's content. The remainder of the voyage was lonely and uneventful. Drake spent most of the monotonous months with his music and his dreams. The *Golden Hind* swept around the Cape of Good Hope, ran straight for Sierra Leone, where water and supplies were obtained and on September 26, 1580, sailed into Plymouth Sound, three years after setting forth on the glorious adventure.

Drake was jubilant. He had encompassed the world. He had brought glory to the English flag. The Spaniards had been humbled and plundered in their own treasure pastures. The *Golden Hind*, lone and gallant rover, had ploughed uncharted seas, pioneering the way for the empire builders to follow. There were riches to lay at the feet of the queen, tales to tell of adventures that would colour and vitalize history.

At Plymouth the bells pealed in Drake's honour. He was cheered and banqueted. To add to the drama of his return was the fact that many—relying on Winter's story—had believed him dead. His renown was soon nation-wide. When he reached London he was a public idol.

Queen Elizabeth, too, was overjoyed. Drake's degradation of the Spanish and his superb navigation in unknown seas stirred her to an ecstasy of pride. The immensity of his plunder thrilled her, though it frightened many of her advisers. They feared that Philip of Spain would declare open warfare. Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, called Drake "the master thief of the unknown world," and demanded the handing over of his booty.

For once Elizabeth was candid and open. Time and time again she sent for Drake, to listen enraptured to his magic stories. She walked with him publicly in the parks and gardens. On

April 4, 1581, when the *Golden Hind* lay at Deptford, she visited the vessel in state, and on its historic, weather-beaten deck Drake knelt before her and was knighted. She further rewarded the sea-dog with at least two gifts of £10,000, brazenly informed Philip of Spain that she regarded the plunder as "compensation" and, although a little of it was eventually restored the bulk was shared between herself, Drake and those who had financed the expedition. The *Golden Hind* lay at Deptford for many years, a national shrine visited by thousands. Eventually the best of its timbers were fashioned into a chair and presented to Oxford University.

Sir Francis Drake lived to win his place in many more spectacular pages of history—to see the Spanish Armada driven from the seas—but his voyage round the world was his unexcelled adventure. He rose to be an admiral of the fleet, but those who love romance will remember him always as the pirate patriot.

# ESCAPE FROM AN ICE FLOE

By

F. A. BEAUMONT

WITH every movement of its screw, the S.S. *Chelyuskin* shuddered as if from the blow of a giant. Rivets loosened, joints sprang under the repeated shocks.

The little Russian steamer was fighting its way through the ice floes of the Arctic Ocean. And slowly, inexorably, the immense white broken barrier was closing in on her, piling up in great ridges of dangerous pack.

One hundred and three people were on board, including ten women and two babies—one of them born during the voyage.

Since the time of King Alfred, the conquest of the Arctic Ocean has been one of the dreams of mankind. Adventurers without number have perished in the attempt to reach the Pacific Ocean by a northern route.

Their ships were found years later, trapped in the icefields, the crews frozen in their bunks. Or they disappeared without trace, battered and sunk by ice floes which can crush the strongest vessel like an eggshell.

After being frozen in for two hundred and ninety-four days, near the mouth of the river Lena, Nordenskjöld, the Swedish explorer, passed the Bering Strait in his tiny ship, the *Vega*, on July 20, 1879, and joyfully declared, "The *Vega* is the first vessel to penetrate by the north from one of the great oceans to the other."

Amundsen and Vilkitski each repeated Nordenskjöld's feat in later years. But all three explorers spent the winter on the way.

In 1932, the Soviet ice-breaker *Sibiriakov*, under Professor Otto Julius Schmidt, was the first vessel to navigate the north-east passage in a single season. She was the sturdiest ship that could be found for this purpose, and was specially built to withstand the attacking ice, which, nevertheless, nearly overwhelmed her.

Encouraged by this success, Schmidt set out on August 8, 1933, with a new expedition in the S.S. *Chelyuskin*. His aim was to discover if ordinary cargo vessels could voyage through the north-east passage and back in a single season.

The *Chelyuskin* reached Wrangel Island and took off a party of Russian scientists who had been left there to study Arctic conditions some months before. Then, assailed by blizzards, storms, and fog, the vessel steamed eastwards through hundreds of miles of pack ice.

It was an agonizing voyage. The vessel had not a minute to lose if she was to reach the open Pacific before the ice closed in. Yet, for all her two thousand four hundred horse power, a head-on crash with an ice pack would have stove in her bows, and she had to dodge incessantly the huge floes which, drifting towards her, might at any moment smash her sides in like match-wood.

The squat little vessel twisted and turned clumsily through one narrow channel after another. Chief-engineer Toikin flew like a shuttle from the telegraph handle—to answer the order from Captain Voronin on the bridge—to the lever to alter the speed. The least mistake in speed might spell irretrievable disaster.

Ice splintered and darted in a vortex from the thrashing screw. Every now and then there would be a crash; a winding crack would flash ahead over the ice, and the vessel would quiver as if mortally stricken. But worst of all were the jams, when the *Chelyuskin* would lie clamped by serried walls of ice, closing in, crushing remorselessly. Then the frenzied crew would spring about the looming, grinding floes, scaling them desperately, sometimes falling into the icy water, as they planted the cans of explosive that alone could blast a way through to safety.

At night, the vessel had to lay-to. Schmidt dare not waste the precious coal for the boilers when even from the crow's nest nothing could be seen through the darkened fog. And in one jam, the *Chelyuskin* could not move for a whole week, though the screw was kept spinning, in case it froze into the water.

The stock of coal was diminishing rapidly. Lack of water, too, became another problem. After passing Kolyouchin Island, the water supply was all used up and the crew had to melt down ice and pump the water into the ship's cisterns.

The polar night now began to close down on the lonely ship. In October, the day had still been fairly long, but by December it had shrunk to three or four hours, and by the end of the month there was only about an hour and a half of what seemed like a dim twilight, with only a few fog-wreathed orange bars in the sky to suggest that, hundreds of miles away, there was sunshine over the world.

Meanwhile, the fight through the ice went on. Every ship, no matter how strongly reinforced, becomes damaged after a time by jagged floes. Even great icebreakers like the *Krassin*, renowned for its part in the rescue of survivors of the Italian airship *Italia*, have to go into dry dock for repair every year.

Captain Voronin spent more time in the crow's nest than on the bridge in his endeavour to spy out the best course, and signal this down to the watch helmsmen, who navigated the *Chelyuskin* as painstakingly as if every floe were a dangerous reef. But it was impossible to avoid heavy ice drifting swiftly into the ship under the pressure of powerful currents.

On one occasion, a large floe struck the *Chelyuskin* as she was entering an area of ice from clear water. The damage was not very serious, as the ship's plates took the blow at an acute angle. But the shock swung the ship sharp to starboard, and another floe, huge and formidable, smashed at right angles full into her starboard plates.

The collision shook the vessel as if she had been rammed by a liner. If the sharp point of the floe had been below the water-line, the end would have been swift. Luckily, it was a foot above, and though a large gaping hole was torn in her side, the crew were able to repair it successfully.

The steamer struggled on, the weather became clearer, and the spirits of every one on board rose to a fever of joy and excitement as the Bering Strait drew nearer and nearer. But fate was to reserve its malice until the victory of the daring little host of adventurers was almost in sight.

The *Chelyuskin* was only six miles from its goal, the open Pacific. A gentle breeze was blowing, and fugitive sunshine now illuminated in kindlier hues the sombre grey and white tones of the omnipresent enemy, the ice. The floes seemed to glisten and take fire. Reflections of aquamarine and turquoise glittered from the freshly-broken "young" ice. Crystals of snow glittered like diamonds, and, here and there in the primal chaos, were depths of emerald and sapphire that made the voyagers catch their breath in ecstasy.

Suddenly the breeze dropped, a raging blizzard began to blow straight from the distant coast. The ice packs, as if ploughed by a giant hand, began to pile up in massive serrated and impenetrable ridges, drifting inexorably northwards. And a few hours later, the *Chelyuskin* had as much chance of reaching open sea as if she had been miraculously transported to the North Pole itself.

Floes ground and tore into each other now, packed ever closer together by the immense underswell. Any ship that tried to make headway through them would have been smashed to pieces. The *Chelyuskin* was trapped and helpless. She could only drift with the ice masses, shoring and topping one another in savage mêlée, and it was only a question of time before they whelmed and crushed her.

Just one hope of salvation remained for the men and women on board the *Chelyuskin*—the radio. On January 16, 1934, the world learned for the first time of their plight and Soviet Russia made preparations for a rescue attempt without parallel in history.

In a few quiet and simple words, Professor Schmidt informed listeners in their radio watch-towers that the expedition was in good health, but that their vessel was trapped, and that the *Chelyuskin* was in danger of being crushed by the pressure of surrounding ice.

During the three months which followed, many more messages were received by an enthralled and horrified world. These stated, in the dry and unemotional terms of scientists who were more interested in their fatal conditions than in themselves, that the vessel was gradually being carried further and further away from all hope of human aid.

The Arctic had gathered all its fury against the little band of daring adventurers. A terrific blizzard was raging, and the cold was sixty degrees below zero, as the *Chelyuskin* drifted northwards. Her ribs were broken at the bows, a hole had been torn in her forward, and her rudder had been snapped off by the heavy ice of the Choukchi Sea.

Expecting every moment would bring the final break-up, Schmidt now had emergency stores ready to be unshipped instantly down to the ice. On the port beam of the boat-deck were piled sacks full of clothing—sleeping-bags, warm under-clothing, fur breeches, thick shirts, and so on. On the starboard side, two months' supply of foodstuffs, covered with tarpaulins, were placed.

Emergency orders were also issued: one press of the button on the captain's bridge and bells would shrill through all living quarters, engine-rooms and stokehold, and every man and woman would go straight to an appointed station and carry out a preordained task.

Once a terrifying ice-jam, when it seemed nothing could avert disaster, forced the captain to press the button. Stores were

swiftly unshipped, and the *Chelyuskin* abandoned. Then suddenly lanes of water split the ice in all directions, the expedition, almost engulfed, rushed aboard again, and by amazing luck the vessel managed to get clear of the crest of ice that crumbled and ricocheted in huge boulders upon the ship.

It was at half-past one in the afternoon of February 13 that doom finally came to the beleaguered vessel. "Under our eyes here and there the ice rose up in high ridges," said Professor Schmidt afterwards. "Ice fields kilometres in extent were being crushed together. It was obvious that the most powerful ship could not stand that pressure. It crumbled immense masses of ice and piled them one on the other. The only thing we did not know was whether the line of some extremely powerful pressure would pass through the ship's position or not. There was no way of preventing the crushing.

"While waiting for the crushing, the captain and myself, together with the workers appointed to watch the ice, stared hard into the blizzard, listening to every sound from the ice——"

"The ridge of ice-pack to our port side shifted and moved down upon us. The floes were tumbled one over another, like crests of sea surf. The oncoming wave of ice towered twenty-six feet above the surface of the sea——"

Crash! The whole ship staggered beneath the onslaught, listed slowly over. A woman screamed as an enormous blue-grey floe loomed through the side of her cabin. No one heard her; no human voice could have prevailed over the slow rending thunder of the ice barrage.

Rivets cracked and flew as the plates were torn from the seams like so much paper. In a flash, the port side was rent open at the fore hold.

Ice burst like torpedoes below the water-line, and water flooded the engine and boiler rooms. To the deafening rumble of destruction was added now the terrific roar of the steam tearing out of the burst steam-pipe. Steam, as it happened, was up in the port boiler right under the ice. The ice shifted the boiler, ripped away the connecting pipes leading to the emergency pump system, and cut off and jammed the valves. But as the steam could now escape through the broken pipes, there was fortunately no explosion.

Crash after crash shook the reeling ship. The water was rising; already men in the holds were knee-deep. Schmidt had expected that, when the end came, it would be a slow foundering. This swift annihilation took him by surprise. But he did not lose his  
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head for one moment, he gave his orders coolly, swiftly, concisely.

The polar night had set in over a month before. It was dusk as the ship was abandoned; the dynamo was crippled, and all lights were out. The fury of the blizzard had reached its height.

Men and women toiled rapidly at unshipping the stores down ladders laid against the starboard side. Each knew the ship had only a few minutes to live. But there was no panic.

Water was now pouring into the fore holds, and her bows began to settle. The last radiogram for help was sent out, and the radio apparatus dismantled and taken off.

The water reached the passenger deck. In another minute it would be pouring from the bridge down on to her stern. "Every man on the ice!" shouted Schmidt.

Captain Voronin and Schmidt were going down the gangway, as the stern of the *Chelyuskin* rose higher and higher—her bows were already under the floes. A falling timber knocked Voronin forward on to the ice.

Then the white face of Boris Mogilyevitch, the quartermaster, was seen at the ship's side. He put one foot over, ran back, and fell under a crashing pile of deck structures. His was the only life lost in this Arctic epic.

There was the cracking of smashed timbers and metal, the stern, wreathed in smoke, rose high in the air, then disappeared. Only a mass of ice and upturned ship's boats and wreckage remained of the *Chelyuskin*.

The expedition found itself on an ice floe many miles in width and length. Stores, scientific instruments and wireless apparatus had been rescued.

The first task was to erect a hut for the shelter of the women and children from the blizzard and appalling cold. Then the men put up tents for themselves.

With the aid of a newly-formed "radio brigade," the wireless operator, Ernest Krenkel, set about erecting a mast. The pegs did not reach through the snow to the solid ice, and would not hold. At first, the mast whipped about like a fishing-rod.

When he had made it firm, Krenkel crawled into a tent and began assembling his set. He had to work without gloves. It was seventy degrees below zero; and soon the pliers, knife and leads were burning his hands. But at last the set was ready for reception. He donned his ear-phones, turned the tuning-knob—and the first communication Schmidt Camp had from the rest of the world was a merry American foxtrot!

He went on searching the ether, and eventually picked up the mainland, eighty-seven miles away. The woman operator, Lloudmilla Schrader, at Wellen, was asking Cape North, "Have you received no signal from the *Chelyuskín*? We are getting a dog-team rescue party ready."

Krenkel switched in the transmitter and called both Wellen and Cape North. There was no answer. Desperately, he tried again and again without success.

He took the wave meter and measured the wave. It was three hundred metres and probably they could not get it. The aerial would have to be lengthened, but that was impossible in the blizzard and the darkness.

Next morning he tried again on a four hundred and fifty wave metre. Hour followed hour as the monotonous tap-tapping went on. The little camp sank deeper and deeper into despair. Suddenly, the operator gave a shout, "Wellen answering!" At last the marooned party were in touch with the outside world again.

But even as their first SOS went out, it must have seemed a forlorn hope indeed to those men and women lost in the Arctic waste. The ice-floe was steadily drifting northwards. Moreover, at any time it might break up into innumerable smaller floes, or might be whelmed and crushed like the *Chelyuskín* itself in another tremendous packing of the ice.

Though the mainland was only eighty-seven miles away, Schmidt wisely decided after prolonged discussion that it was out of the question for the expedition to make for it on foot. In the first place, every mile over pack ice is equivalent to eight or ten miles on an even track.

High floes have to be clambered over, and coming down on the other side one fell into unseen holes and crevasses. Men often had to be pulled out after sinking to their waists in water. The going was so rough that such a journey would have to be reckoned as eight hundred miles rather than eighty-seven.

Some people, such as women and invalids, Schmidt argued, would find the journey very trying, and a few would have to be taken on sledges. In these circumstances, the expedition would only make three or four miles a day, which would mean between twenty-five and thirty days' struggle over the ice.

Food and supplies needed for such a journey would work out at a hundredweight to be carried or dragged by each person, an impossible load for even the strongest. And the idea that the ill and weak should be left behind to a certain death in order that the

others should survive was one that never entered Schmidt's mind for a moment.

And what if the expedition encountered fissures, lanes, and open water? Either a boat would have to be taken or the open patches would have to be circumvented. The expedition had no canvas or rubber boat, and each of its heavy ice-boats would need the strength of ten men for dragging over the ice. Circumventing open patches, moreover, would lengthen the journey by dozens of miles. Moreover, it would mean deviating from the true course, and dog teams or aeroplanes might miss the expedition, unless radio equipment were carried.

Though a hundred dog teams were speeding towards the camp, Schmidt rightly predicted that they would be unable to reach it. They would have to be driven from the mainland by Choukchi natives, who will not risk even known tracks when there is the slightest chance of bad weather. They would encounter countless cracks and open lanes in the ice field which might be difficult or impossible to traverse.

Then, how could they steer to the camp? They would carry no radio. Compass readings would be useless, for the ice was constantly drifting, and the position of the camp after twenty-five days, the time needed for a dog team journey, would be considerably altered. If the course deviated by quite a small angle from the true one, the dog team might pass the camp too far away to see the smoke from its signal tower.

Schmidt decided he had no right to risk the lives of rescue parties in such desperate ventures, and wirelessly the mainland to that effect.

The only hope of rescue was by aeroplane, fantastic as it seemed at the time to all who had had any experience of the coldest and stormiest areas of the Polar seas.

So the men in the little camp set to work like Trojans constructing an aerodrome on some level ice nearly four miles away. There was only a limited number of shovels, so the carpenters made some big mauls to break up the ice. But most of the tools in making the aerodrome were human backs and arms. Hundreds of tons of ice were shifted to make a level landing ground. Often a sudden ice pressure would destroy the labour of a week. But the little party would set to work again with courage and energy undimmed.

They had provisions, which, scantily eked out, would last two months. Breakfast was tea and a biscuit, dinner a thin soup or porridge or rice, supper the same again.

And so the little party settled down on the ice to await the incredible advent of a "steel bird" (as they called it) winging its way through fog and blizzards and cold from thousands of miles away—or for death in the illimitable icy waste.

Meanwhile, from all over the Soviet Union, aeroplanes manned by picked airmen were hastening to the shores of the Arctic. The world shook its head in admiring incredulity; it was impossible for both men and engines to conquer such difficulties as were involved in long-distance flights over Siberia and the Arctic.

Seven young Soviet airmen proved the experts were wrong, effected a rescue without parallel in Polar annals, and added a new chapter to the mastery of the air. They were Anatoli Lyapidevski, Vassili Molokov, Sigismund Levanevski, Mavriki Slepnyov, Nikolai Kamanin, Mikhail Vodopyanov, and Ivan Doronin.

The aeroplanes were ordered to air bases at Wellen and Vankarem on the Siberian coast. Polar fliers with experience of flying at Siberian aerodromes told the young airmen they were attempting suicide. True, they had only to fly ninety miles to the marooned camp. But there were blizzards, dense fogs, and Polar night all the way, temperatures dropped as low as a hundred degrees of frost, freezing both lungs and engines, and landing anywhere on the ice fields meant certain death.

Lyapidevski was the first of the heroic seven to arrive at Wellen, late in December. Before his water-cooled machine could rise into the air as he took off for Schmidt camp, the oil had to be boiled.

"There were sixty-one degrees of frost fahrenheit," he said afterwards. "The hot water literally began to chill while it was being poured. I took my place in the cabin. I could feel my eyelashes freezing together. I was almost blind.

"As I took off the machine bumped her right runner, but still she took off, began to climb. I set her up. I felt a piercing pain in my face. Then the left engine began to cough, so, willy-nilly, I had to turn back, or it would be the end of me. I began to plane down. I clenched my teeth against the terrible pain and tried to keep my grip on the joystick and land her. I succeeded. Flight mechanic Roukovski grabbed some snow from the fuselage and rubbed my cheeks. The next day I was sitting about with a bandaged dial and felt rotten, my skin burning and bleeding."

Altogether, Lyapidevski made thirty-six unsuccessful attempts to reach the camp during the next few weeks, and was each time turned back by blizzards. On February 13 he received a radiogram, "*Chelyuskin* smashed up. One hundred persons on the

ice." And two days later another, "Take all measures for rescue of expedition and equipment of *Chelyuskin*." A hurricane was raging; the local Choukchis had buried themselves in their huts. It was the bitterest moment in the young airman's life.

On March 5 his patience was at an end. He decided to make the flight, whatever the weather. Fortunately this turned out good. "We kept a look-out, but there was no camp, only an endless sea of pack ice," he reported. "We kept on moving about and staring till our eyes ached." The machine was flying over the limitless spaces of a desert of ice. The calm was eerie. An ice peace of the ages. The machine seemed to be just dangling in the air. Then suddenly he saw the smoke signal of the camp.

To the men and women enduring that living death in the interminable silence of the ice, it seemed as if a miracle had happened. Rushing out of their primitive dwellings, they shouted a hysterical welcome, throwing their fur caps in the air.

But Lyapidevski was circling round anxiously over the landing ground. It was only one hundred and sixty feet wide, and he was used to a width of five hundred feet. Moreover, it was banked by ice ridges a yard high. To his intense surprise he made an easy landing, and was soon shaking hands with Professor Schmidt.

There was little time to spare for mutual congratulations. The ten women and the two babies were quickly assisted into the huge twin-engined plane, for the first rule of rescue, "women and children first," was not forgotten. In eighty degrees of frost, the machine rose into the air and set off on the hazardous return journey. It was accomplished safely, and the astounding news flashed through the world that the first rescue of the *Chelyuskin* survivors had been effected without mishap.

Lyapidevski made further attempts on March 10, 11, 12, and 13 to break through the snowstorms but was forced back. On March 14 he crashed in the ice field. He and his crew were unhurt, but at first they wished they had been killed, for death by cold and starvation seemed their certain fate. They left the aeroplane and set out over the ice. All at once they saw a Choukchi. By an amazing stroke of luck the plane had come down near the Choukchi settlement at Lolycouchin Island, and they were saved.

Other planes were meanwhile fighting their way northwards over the Siberian wastes. Doronin and Vodopyanov led one detachment. At Cape Gadikan they ran into the tail of a typhoon from Japan. The aeroplanes began to toss badly, and were forced down. The aerodrome was large, but covered with ice, and the

anemometers showed that the wind velocity was twenty yards a second. Nevertheless, all the machines landed safely.

Bastanzhiyev, another airman in this detachment, was separated from the other planes, and flew alone at six thousand feet over the Pau-Pau range of mountains. The snowy mist was so dense that he lost altitude and crashed, wrecking his machine utterly. Luckily he and his mechanic and engine-man were unhurt. But for two days their only shelter from a terrific blizzard was the wing of the plane. They crawled under it, covered themselves with snow, and made a hole in the snow for air.

At Anadyr, the detachment was delayed for five days by a blizzard which buried their machines in snow. The snow even got through the tiny holes through which the control cables passed. Both Doronin and Vodopyanov battled their way to Schmidt Camp and rescued more of the Chelyuskinians.

Kamanin and Molokov, in another detachment, were caught in a fierce blizzard over the dread Anadyr range of mountains, at seven thousand five hundred feet. The fog was so dense that in an attempt to get below it they dropped to three thousand three hundred feet—and found it worse than ever. "We thought we should go nose first into the mountains," said Kamanin later. "It was like plunging through a sea of ink: I could not see the wings of my machine." By great good fortune they passed unwittingly through a gap in the mountains.

Molokov and Kamanin both reached Schmidt Camp on April 7. A list of names had been drawn up by Professor Schmidt of members of the marooned party, in an order corresponding to their physical condition. Schmidt had inflammation of the lungs, verging on pneumonia, but he refused to be taken off before the last.

Though Molokov's machine was intended to hold only two persons, he squeezed four behind him in the cockpit. Then he actually lashed two more beneath the wings in the slots intended to hold the parachutes. These two men were wrapped in the parachutes to protect them from the terrific cold of the return flight.

Meanwhile the ice floe was breaking up, fissuring into lanes and channels of water. Rescue became more and more urgent if the marooned men were to be saved from drowning. One crack went right through the wooden hut: it collapsed like matchwood.

On April 4, a rumble like distant guns at sea, warned the little party that the ice was beginning to pack again. The broken floes crashed together now with tremendous shocks, a case of matches falling between two flared like a torch. By April 9, a

gigantic ridge of ice floes was bearing down on the camp, now grinding and whining, now toppling over with crashes like thunder. The destruction of the tiny community was imminent.

But almost every day now, an aeroplane was snatching another human batch from the jaws of death. Would there be time to rescue everyone?

Molokov alone had made nine journeys over the ice in awful weather, and had rescued thirty-nine men. The last man he brought back was Professor Schmidt, lying ill with a temperature of one hundred and two degrees. Moscow had wirelessly an imperative order that he was to be taken off the ice against his will, immediately.

Slepnyov and Levanevski were actually sent by the Soviet to the United States to buy big American planes. They flew from Fairbanks, Alaska, through blinding snow over the Bering Strait, and along the coast to Wellen. Slepnyov took part in the April 7 flight to Schmidt Camp, when he slightly damaged his machine. Later, when his plane was repaired, he brought ten men to the mainland on April 10.

Bobrov, Schmidt's assistant, had taken over command at the camp since the departure of his chief. The dawn of April 13 brought the last trio of rescuing aircraft, piloted by Molokov and two others. The last of the stores and equipment were loaded on board. Then Schmidt Camp sent out its last radio message to the world, "April 13. Radio stopping. In half an hour, I, Captain Voronin and Wireless-Operator Krenkal will be the last to leave the camp, where the Soviet flag is flying—Bobrov."

Every man and woman had been saved. Even the dogs were rescued. All the scientific apparatus and indeed everything of value was brought back to the mainland.

Such is the epic of the *Chelyuskin* rescue, in which wireless and aviation played greater parts in saving human life than ever before. Yet these marvels of our age would have been useless without the skill and gallantry of the airmen, each of whom was awarded a special decoration by the Soviet Government.

Every minute of those three long months of rescue was a race against overwhelming odds. The heroic airmen arrived just in time. Another ten days, and they would have been too late. A few strands of wreckage, crushed in tumbling ice, would have been all that was left. Instead, every human being on that drifting ice floe in the Arctic lived to bear witness to one of the greatest adventures of modern times.

# ACROSS THE WORLD'S WORST DESERT

*By*  
W. J. MAKIN

"**Y**OU'LL never get across. Other men have tried and failed. They went into the desert and were never heard of again." So said an old prospector, shaking his head at the six men who had announced their intention of crossing the Kalahari from east to west.

The Kalahari, a vast white expanse on the map north of the Orange River, is the least known of all African deserts. In North Africa the French have thoroughly explored the Sahara, and there are no secrets which have not been revealed. In South Africa the Kalahari has remained impenetrable. Queer stories have occasionally come from out this waste of sand and scrub, stories of white men who have died of thirst or "gone native," stories of illimitable wealth in gold and diamonds. The only men who can endure this desert are bushmen, said to be the lowest form of human being alive.

Yet, after a desperate effort, the six men did cross this desert. I, for one, would not readily attempt that nightmare journey again. Two motor lorries and a native guide enabled us to travel a thousand miles of desert. We came out unwashed, our eyes bloodshot with sand, lips smeared with the mud of the one water hole which we had sucked greedily, and two men half dead with fever. We had accomplished what no other white man had done before, and there were in our possession some of the secrets of this amazing desert.

Instinctively, the bushmen scented danger in our expedition. They had been harried by white men in all parts of Africa south of the Zambezi, and this desert was their last refuge. For years German colonists had been granted permission to shoot bushmen on sight as wild animals. The remnants of this once great tribe had braved the sandy wastes of the Kalahari and found a wonderful sanctuary in the very middle of the desert.

This sanctuary we found. Their last effort to keep the secret was to start an enormous bush fire, twelve miles in extent, which



swept towards our motor lorries and their tanks of petrol. Only by a desperate speeding across the desert did we escape the flames and come through.

In the heart of the Kalahari lives a wonderful ranching country. There are vast plains of grassland with water just below the surface. It would support thousands of white settlers and add materially to the food production of the world. But it is surrounded by a sea of sand and scrub on all sides and, until we discovered it, was believed to be a myth.

On these vast plains, which are the happy hunting grounds of the bushmen, we discovered big game of all kinds. Many of these animals, like the bushman, have sought sanctuary here from the hunters who have harried them in other parts of Africa. Herds of giraffe craned their long necks at the sight of our motor caravan. Vast herds of zebra, wildebeest, antelope and buck galloped madly through the long grass. The roaring of lions was heard at night. Once through the darkness the sound of something like a tornado swept past our camp. It was a herd of elephants crashing through the bush.

The bushmen, the natives of this desert, were our chief study. They were not easy to find. They have an uncanny manner of completely camouflaging themselves. Often our expedition would camp in what appeared to be a country of complete desolation. Not a hut or sign of life anywhere. Even the vultures seemed to avoid these parts. Yet within ten minutes of our camp fire being lighted several bushmen would materialize, walking in single file across the desert as a protection against the huge black mamba snake that infests the country.

These little people, so delicately moulded in their limbs, naked to the winds, would crouch at a respectful distance from our fire. Cheap tobacco, held in the hand, would entice them nearer. Soon they would be warming themselves against the fire. They carried with them their bows and arrows with which they killed the big game. The arrows were all dipped in a secret vegetable poison. All our attempts to find the origin of this poison, which deals death swifter than a snake, failed.

Their hunting craft is astonishing. They dig pits in which they crouch for their prey. Often enough they use the lions as their dogs. They will patiently follow a lion that is stalking a buck. Once the lion has killed its prey, the bushmen appear and scare the lion away. Then they fall upon the carcase.

Sometimes they will tackle an elephant. They make a leap

from a tree on to the elephant's haunches, hanging on to the tail. They hammer away with a little hatchet making a deep wound and, at the same time cling for dear life as the beast plunges through the bush. Eventually the elephant collapses from loss of blood. Sometimes, however, the beast manages to fling the bushman to earth and trample on him.

Existing precariously on the western edge of the desert are a few white men. They are a strange crowd. On the day that we were emerging from the desert on the western side we came across a lonely stone house. A white man, dressed in the meticulous style of a Victorian gentleman, came out of his hut to meet us. His long grey locks fell across a Dutch type of collar, but his cravat was tied with care, and the extraordinary excitement that our appearance must have caused him was hidden behind a courteous and restrained greeting.

He was ready enough to give us directions as to our route, but curbed our curiosity regarding himself. "You seem to be very curious and inquisitive," he said in rebuke when we asked him why he lived in such a lonely and forsaken spot. We did, however, discover that he had once been a schoolmaster, that he had contributed articles to a British political quarterly, and that he spent most of his time scribbling notes to add to a pile of manuscript.

He possessed a son and daughter. The daughter, a girl of sixteen, poked her head out of the house at our approach, and then hurriedly hid herself. During our conversation with her father curiosity compelled her to peep from the doorway again but once any eyes were turned in her direction she fled into the obscurity of the hut. The son, we gathered, was living like a native in a hut near by. Twenty-three years of age, he went about almost naked. He accompanied the bushmen with bow and arrow on their hunting expeditions, and was as adept as any native. He could also follow the spoor of animals for miles. His father regretted that all attempts to clothe him had failed.

We camped within a mile of this house. In the evening a fiendish din, shrieks, the clapping of hands and the sound of a tom-tom drew us towards the house once again. We found the old man, divested of a good many of his clothes, his son and a number of naked bushmen indulging in a wild dance round a fire. Occasionally, with a loud shriek, one of the bushmen would fling himself into the blaze and leap forth again. It was a macabre sight for civilized eyes.

I recall another lonely white man whom we met living on the

edge of the desert. His home was a native hut, made of clay and reeds, but full of comfort and little luxuries inside. He had a number of bushmen servants around him, and on the day of our arrival invited us to dinner in the evening.

We began this journey into the world's worst desert from a point on the single track railroad that leads from Capetown to Elizabethville in the Belgian Congo. Our rendezvous was at a place called Mahalapye, a cluster of corrugated iron-roofed huts on the edge of the desert. There, gathered the six men.

They were :

Sir B. E. H. Clifford, now Governor of the Bahamas.

Inspector Beeching, of the Bechuanaland Police.

W. A. Grantham, of the Morris Motor Company

W. Millington, chauffeur to the Earl of Athlone.

H. Stiles, a South African mechanic.

W. J. Makin, the author of this adventure story.

Since we blazed this trail across the Kalahari Desert, several other expeditions have attempted to follow. None has succeeded. A few penetrated deeply from either side of this vast sea of sand, but were forced by difficulties to return. The journey, thus related in my diary which follows, still remains unique.

Mahalapye, June 19.

Six men are covertly eyeing each other under a kerosene lamp in the local hotel. We are to be flung together into the inevitable intimacy that life in the desert demands. At the moment we are excessively friendly with each other. I wonder how long it will be before we discover the worst points and vile habits of the other man.

There is much talk about the desert. Inspector Beeching, who has spent seven years in the Kalahari and is known among the natives as "The Father of the Camels," seems a singularly mild-mannered individual. At the moment he is enjoying to the full the pathetic pretence at civilization that one finds here on the edge of the desert.

Two motor drivers discuss gears, petrol consumption, engines, tyres and all the mechanism of their trades. I never knew how controversial such subjects could be. The conversation is flaring, like the kerosene lamp.

I yawn, and go to bed.

June 20.

We have begun the journey into the desert. Two or three traders, a woman with a Kodak, the stationmaster in full uniform,

and a group of natives who had seized the opportunity to cease digging the earth, watched our two Morris motor trucks pant away into the desert. I suppose pioneers should be cheered on such an occasion. I was glad nobody even raised a shout; only the woman with fierce determination insisted on our posing for her Kodak. The click of her camera released us from our absurd and unreal postures.

For some miles the journey seemed no more exciting than if we had been motoring to a suburb of Capetown or Johannesburg. I half expected a red-tiled roof and white walls to appear behind the next clump of bushes. A bird with a curious cry hovered in the sky above the trucks. It is named the "go away" bird. A sinister beginning.

Towards the afternoon we saw a large collection of native huts in the distance. This is Shoshong, a native town of some importance. At least a hundred piebald dogs announced our approach, and as we entered the dusty arena formed by the huts, native women shrilled and clapped their hands.

There is a Jew trader in this native town, and we made for his store. He gave us a splendid welcome, consisting of an excellent chicken roasted by his sister, fifteen cups of tea, some slabs of cake, and a behind-the-counter glimpse of the medley of articles contained in his store. I like these bravely coloured blankets and yellow shoes for natives. The trader, too, is worthy of a romantic story by O. Henry. His sister had recently arrived from London. We argued whether a 69 'bus passed down the Strand or not. Astonished to find these thoroughly domesticated people living among some four thousand natives. There is a daughter, too, from the High School, at Salisbury. It is the *Swiss Family Robinson* all over again.

That night we camped on the veldt several miles from Shoshong. The blazing camp fire, a canopy of stars, and what Rupert Brooke describes as "the male kiss of rough blankets," all keep me awake. I watch, from my sleeping bag, a sickle moon sink slowly below the horizon. It is not long before the black sky is bruised a bad yellow by the rising sun. An enamelled cup of hot coffee is put at my side.

June 21.

We are ploughing our way through thorn bush and sand. The country is just a sea of desolation, with an occasional tree tortured and twisted in the very agony of existence. In the distance I see a gigantic lake, shimmering in the sunshine. Gazing at it through

my glasses I discover that it is merely a mirage, one of those tantalizing visions to be found in the desert.

We pass a water hole. It is caked mud. Cattle have stamped and sucked all the the water from it. I am comforted at the thought that we carry a tank of water on one of the trucks. We shall need every drop of it. We discover, to our horror, that our engines have drunk twenty gallons during the day. This cannot go on. We hold a conference on the matter. We decide to travel during the night when the air is cold and the engines will not boil. Grantham comes to the rescue by improvising a condenser out of an old petrol tin and a piece of tubing. It serves.

We travel all through the night. The desert is a sinister place when seen in the stark light of our headlamps. The icy cold air keeps me cowering over the warmth of the engine. As dawn comes we break through the thorn scrub and reach a wide plain. Great herds of cattle with native boys are trailing across this plain, raising clouds of dust. This is Lephephe, the water hole for all desert cattle. A little muddy coloured water is added to our precious store here, but it is the last we shall see until we reach the western side of the desert.

There are five camels here, the caravan of Inspector Beeching. He shows them to us with pride. I am becoming convinced that the camel is the best form of transport in the desert, after all. We take advantage of this oasis and stay until the evening. At 7.30 p.m. we set out to reach our next point, twenty-three miles away.

During our journey through the night a pack of wild dogs lope after the trucks. I can see their yellow eyes gleaming in the darkness, and as our headlight is turned on them one gets a glimpse of bared fangs. Clifford seizes his rifle. The car is stopped. A shot is fired and one of the dogs falls writhing to the ground. The others rush forward and tear at their fallen comrade. We speed away from the horrible sight. During the night we also hear the howling of wolves

June 22.

We are not a pretty sight this morning. Grantham collapsed at the wheel and had to be carried into the back of the truck where I doubt very much if he could rest owing to the lurching and pitching over the veldt. Clifford took his place at the wheel. Our eyes are bloodshot from the sand. The going is particularly hard. At one period we covered only two miles in two hours.

During the morning we arrived at a certain camelthorn tree where we pitched our camp. Our meal was tea and baked beans. I tried to sleep, but myriads of flies tortured me.

We set out again in the afternoon. The sand is so bad that we are using the caterpillar tractors. Again the sun sets and there begins another frightful journey through the night. I try desperately to keep awake. I have not slept for three days. I doze, lurching about in this scrub and sand. In the midst of this hazy dream I awake, startled by a shot. Clifford had spotted a duiker and shot it. We need it badly for food. We decide to camp in this spot. I wrapped myself in a kaross, stretched myself by the fire and was asleep in two minutes. Two hours later I was awakened for breakfast.

June 23.

There is to be no rest. Immediately after breakfast the journey was resumed. There is more heavy sand and thick bush. Towards noon we stumble across a group of huts. A few Kalahari natives live there. It is called Zuwe. The headman, an old, white-bearded native, comes forth to welcome us. His face is cut in parts and some black substance smeared in the cuts. This, he tells us, is his medicine. He has been ill with fever.

A few goats lie about the village in the desert. I prowl about and discover a bushman. He is naked except for a skin pouch hung about his waist. His hair is shaved from his head, except at the edges. When he speaks it is with a soft, musical voice. He carries with him an ostrich egg shell which contains his water. A gift of some cheap tobacco induces him to talk. He has come across the desert from Molepolole in order to visit some of his nomadic friends. He will return to his master in a few weeks, taking along with him a gift of skins to propitiate him for his absence.

We camp outside the village and both trucks are overhauled. Grantham, Millington and Stiles, our drivers, smear themselves with grease and crawl beneath these monsters on wheels. It is these sallow-faced fellows smelling of petrol who are the real pioneers and explorers of today. They and their mechanism have conquered the tropics and the Arctic regions.

In the evening we set off again. We are to pass through a lion-infested region known as Matapi. Under the headlamps of the car I see the whole aspect of the country changing. The sand gives way to stone, and then huge boulders appear. We have to go carefully. There is no sign of lions or any other game other

than a few jackals. Obviously they have trekked after the game which has left this region because there is no water.

The boulders give way to sand again. A chilly wind sweeps across. Our headlamps reveal another cluster of huts. A naked savage stands by a camp fire. He is a striking figure. There is a grinding and churning from our wheels. We are hopelessly stuck in the sand. A few natives materialize. It is a ghastly place in which we are stuck. Lurid language is being used. Bleached bones are in the sand around us. It is impossible to go farther. We hustle the natives into finding wood. A miserable small fire is started, and we crouch down and wait for the dawn. This place is called Kuke. "When I am dead you will find Kuke written on my heart," exclaims Clifford savagely.

June 24.

We escape from this village and reach another dry water-hole. We breakfast there, sleep a little, and then go on. Again the interminable desert. We all loathe it and each other by now. At last the desolation ends. We find our trucks running smoothly through a vast expanse of grassland. There are plenty of trees, too. The limestone formation suggests that water is beneath the surface. "This ought to be one of the finest ranching countries in the world," says Clifford. "It is infinitely better than some of the best land in Rhodesia." We begin to see game everywhere. A herd of giraffe crane their long necks in our direction. Then we see a herd of wildebeest galloping madly through the long grass. Buck are darting about on all sides. Our guide, Hendriks, sees lion spoor in the sand. We also get near to a herd of zebra. This is one of the happy hunting grounds of the Kalahari.

June 25.

We are now more than half way across the desert. We have been led in a zig-zag fashion, due to the fact that the guide finds his way by certain defined landmarks. Moreover, natives go from one melon patch or waterhole to another.

During the day we met several bushmen. It is astonishing how they appear from nowhere. Often we reach a spot on the veldt which seems destitute of any human being. Yet, within a few minutes of the smoke of our camp fire going up to the sky bushmen will come through the long grass. They group themselves at a respectful distance from our fire, displaying their bare stomachs all scarred by sitting too close to fire. They are a hungry lot.

I asked our guide, Hendriks, if he preferred crossing the desert in motor cars to riding his camel. He shook his head. "One can

sleep on a camel," he said, briefly. "I have not slept in the motor car."

June 26.

Still we are travelling through this wonderful grassland with its quantities of game. Two black eagles hover for hours above our little caravan. We discover many deserted huts. Obviously the natives have moved away where there is water to be found. We reach an enormous dry pan known as Godadimo. Vultures were squatting round the remains of a buck, killed by a lion. There are a few inches of mud at the bottom of the pan. Jock, our terrier, wallows with obvious enjoyment in this mud.

At this point our petrol is causing anxiety. We expect supplies at Ghanzi, the western edge of the desert towards which we are travelling. But it is doubtful whether the supplies we carry will last. We decide that, if the worst comes, we will abandon one lorry, drain the petrol, and continue with the other.

We camp that night near the pan. It is so cold that our water bag freezes to ice. I wonder who that sentimental fool can be who wrote "When the sands of the desert grow cold"? They grow cold every night.

June 27.

We are in the desert again. Sand and scrub once more. The grasslands have disappeared. This is one of our most desperate days, with water and petrol running low. Moreover, the trucks are making very slow progress through the sand. We trek along all day, and about eight in the evening stop for a meal. We are all thoroughly exhausted. Clifford staggers with fatigue, and his eyes droop heavily through lack of sleep. We do not talk to each other. We are much too tired.

Mechanically, we take our places in the trucks again, and move on. Again that hopeless scrub and sand. After twelve miles several punctures brought us to a stop. We sat down to mend them. The guide started a big camp fire. I do not know how it happened, but we all fell asleep and woke up the next morning looking sheepishly at each other.

June 28.

Our food supplies being low, Beeching and I set out to shoot something. We found no game in this desert. A brace of guinea-fowl, however, did help towards breakfast. We have now been on the veldt for a week, and personally I feel as hard as nails.

We were soon on the move again. This part of the desert proved to be some of the worst country we have yet traversed.



I am becoming heartily sick of the sand. I seem to be eating and drinking it.

We climbed a hill and descended into a wide river bed. This river was the Iakwa, and it has ceased to flow for many years. At one time it must have been as wide and spacious as the Zambesi, and crocodiles and hippo must have bathed in it. Now it is just a wide channel of sand. Perhaps water still exists underground, for we began to discover the tsama, or melon, for the first time. There was plenty of game in this district, and our food supplies were excellent at the end of the day.

June 29.

We continued along the dry bed of this gigantic river and, towards noon, climbed out and plunged once more into that sea of scrub and sand. There is beginning to be a terrible sameness about the terrain. If only this bare, bleak horizon would show a kopje I feel that we should all shout with joy.

With a lack of landmarks we are entirely dependent on the compass for our direction. The stars at night are a great help. But the utter loneliness of the desert seems to grip one. Instinctively the six men huddle together round the fire at night. From out the darkness comes the mournful moan of hyenas.

We are strictly rationed on water now. The tinned milk is finished. The petrol question is acute. I begin to think of the gallons of water I have used throughout life to wash myself. I have not washed for days. Everyone has grown a beard.

June 30.

There is a bare possibility that petrol may be found fifty miles away. The Shell Company have sent it over from Windhoek, and the police at the outpost of Ghanzi have had instructions to take it by camel to a point of thirty miles within the desert. But it is doubtful whether they have had time to do this.

Against the horizon this morning was the smoke and flame of a gigantic bush fire. It is from the direction where our petrol dump should be. We are all pessimistic. We answer each other shortly and with lurid appellations. The lorries, too, are behaving badly. One stoppage after another is necessitated by some mechanical difficulty. We are quite prepared to walk the rest of the journey.

We passed through one pan after another, all dry. Over a mug of tea that evening Clifford had the courage to tell me that he hated champagne. I recklessly lit my last cigarette and talked to him of a place in Soho, where the Veuve Cliquot is superb.

July 1.

Although it was midnight when we camped last night, we were away at six in the morning. It is essential that we reach Van Zyl's Cutting, a cleft in the rock made by a Dutch elephant hunter, who was subsequently killed by bushmen. Years later his son, too, was killed by bushmen. There seems to have been a vendetta against this particular family. A native told us that Van Zyl had sjamboked a bushman to death, and the tribe took revenge.

During the day we found we had travelled over five hundred miles. We should be nearing the end of the desert crossing. Just as the sun was setting, our guide gave a shout. His keen eyes had detected camel spoor in the sand. We looked around. There was a bush with a piece of paper fluttering from a twig. On closer examination we found that it had been torn from a monthly periodical. Obviously, it was an indication.

Feverishly we set to work with spades. The loose sand was swept away, and two drums of petrol revealed. We were saved. At the same time we discovered water a hundred yards away in the cleft in the rock.

We all drank greedily.

That night we camped near our first water since crossing the desert, opened our last tin of jam, and had a perfectly lavish meal. At the end I felt as distended with water and food as those bushmen we had seen on our journey.

July 2.

This morning we came across our first habitation. A lonely stone house on the edge of the desert. A white man with grey locks, carefully dressed, a keen, intellectual face, came forth to greet us. The excitement our arrival must have caused him was carefully hidden behind a courteous but restrained greeting.

We went on. A few miles, and we saw a flagstaff with the Union Jack hanging limply in the hot sunshine. Three white houses stood on a kopje. There was a man in white ducks waiting to receive us, a khaki-clad sergeant, and four native policemen standing swiftly to attention. This was Ghanzi, a real outpost of the Empire.

The man in white ducks, the magistrate, came forward and held out his hand. "Good afternoon," he said, simply. Clifford shook hands with him.

"For God's sake give me a cigarette," begged Grantham.

We had crossed the Kalahari.

# THE LONE CLIMBER OF EVEREST

By

A. J. RUSSELL

**M**AN's spirit is unconquerable. Every generation has produced its dauntless great. Our own generation too can display a company of unconquerables who lose nothing by comparison with those of the past.

One of the brave spirits whose name appears on this scroll of fame was perhaps inspired by the legendary boy whose banner bore that strange device—Excelsior. His contemporaries had sought fame through danger on land and sea and under the sea, in the air and in the trenches; and he, too, was not without kindred experiences. But his bold spirit was unique in that he dared something no one else had ever contemplated, and probably none will ever try to follow in his footsteps. For he chose no less formidable a task than to climb alone the mighty summit of Everest, queen of the Himalayas or Snow Abode, loftiest peak of a sea of mountain peaks, tallest and most inaccessible pyramid in the world.

Captain Maurice Wilson was a young man from Bradford, son of a manufacturer, and for his courageous services in the Great War he was awarded the Military Cross. But he thirsted for more stirring adventures. To those twin worlds which are accessible only to the bravest of men—flight and mountaineering—he was an unknown newcomer, perhaps an intruder. But he had a firm jaw, a lithe and powerful body, and such courage as only the very few can know. He had no fear of facing alone what the majority of mankind would turn from in terror when in the company of brave companions.

Of self-confidence he had a boundless store. He studied books on Everest. He was impressed by the achievements of the three great expeditions which had attempted unsuccessfully to storm that unconquered and unconquerable peak. Himself, an apostle of loneliness and somewhat of a mystic, though of a practical and adventurous order, he was the type of man to be deeply stirred by that story of F. S. Smythe, victor of Kamet, who nearly reached the top of Everest.

Smythe recorded in *Everest 1933* that after his companion Eric

Shipton had fallen out from sickness, he had an uncanny experience of a presence from the Beyond accompanying him when climbing alone at twenty-seven thousand feet. Smythe said the feeling was so strong that it completely eliminated all sense of loneliness. It seemed even that he was tied to his invisible companion by a rope and if he had slipped "He" would have held him safe. He remembered constantly glancing back over his shoulder and once, after reaching the highest point, he stopped to eat some cake; as he did so he carefully divided it and turned round with one half in his hand. Then he experienced almost a shock to find no one with whom to share it. To Smythe it had seemed that this presence was strong, helpful and friendly; and it was not until returning down to the highest camp that the link connecting him with the Beyond was snapped and, his comrades now only a few yards away, he felt really alone.

Shackleton, too, recorded a similar experience when plodding "farthest south" in the Antarctic.

Maurice Wilson believed in such experiences and had had them himself. He claimed that the Beyond had inspired his lone attempt on Everest. He believed, too, that the supernatural was on the side of the ascetic, the man who hardened himself by frequent fastings to the rigours of life, including those of gale-swept mountain ridges. The *yogi-man*, the man who had conquered all his physical cravings, and not the highly-skilled European climber, he contended, was the likeliest conqueror of Everest. Furthermore the victor was less likely to come from one of those highly organized British expeditions of a dozen European climbers supported by a hundred Nepalese porters, encumbered by much baggage, than from a tiny party of one ascetic climber accompanied by two or three natives, travelling as light as possible.

So before he left England he began to practise long and arduous fasts. In time he found that a period of eight or ten days without food was no hardship; rather was it a preparation. That these long fasts did not lessen his courage or undermine his physical strength was shown in a number of ways. He joined the London Aeroplane Club and took a pilot's certificate. His early flying experiences were not without serious incident. Once he descended suddenly and crashed into a tree. A schoolboy walking along the highway was surprised to be hailed by Wilson, an airman in distress, in a topsy-turvy machine. The astonished lad did his best and the airman scrambled free, none the worse for his misadventure.

Soon after this, according to the airman, the real fun began. The best description obtainable of those adventures is given by himself in a letter which he wrote to me from India. He introduced himself thus:

"My dear friend, I know you but you don't know me though you will do so at the end of ten minutes. I am Maurice Wilson the flying 'nut' (as some people think) who is out to do a solo climb on Mount Everest. And here's the story. If in its details I appear to be blowing my own trumpet don't let it worry you; there's nothing personal about me from start to finish.

"I received the inspiration to climb Everest and proceeded to develop it. This was to get myself thoroughly fit, learn to fly myself, buy a machine and do the job. And I proceeded, studying all known conditions of Everest in the meantime. I returned to England at the end of the year, took my pilot's licence and bought a machine. After only forty hours flying I was ready for the job.

"My original plan was to take off quietly, presumably on a flight to Australia, and without the permission of the Nepalese Government. I intended to do the job from Purnea the base of the Houston flight over Everest. At the persuasion of a friend (and I now know he was right) I got a certain amount of publicity before leaving. Unfortunately along came a letter from the Air Ministry inquiring if recent reports were true, informing me at the same time they did not think it probable that the Nepalese Government would allow the permit; yet not asking if they could be of assistance in securing it.

"I replied, foolishly perhaps, that the information was true, though their attitude would have been more appreciated had they offered assistance. Then came a two-page letter which I ignored and, twenty-four hours before leaving, a two-page wire of warning, which I also ignored.

"The gloves were off; what next?

"I took off on May 21, 1933. Six weeks before I had been notified that my permit to fly through Persia was awaiting me at Cairo. I rang the officials up on arrival and I registered immediately that there was *nothing doing*! The chief proved really too affable under the circumstances. 'Sorry old man, there's no permit here for you. If there's anything I can possibly do for you just let me know'—and offered me the world! Well Everest wasn't Cairo so on I pushed to Bagdad, where I discovered a new route down the southern side of the Persian Gulf, through Bahrein, a British Protectorate, and in use by the Imperial Airways. The only map

I could buy of this route showed half the Gulf. For fuel I trusted to luck and to what I could pick up at Bahrein, but, on the instructions of the British Consul, this was refused to me. The consul had the audacity to suggest that I should fly north, one hundred and eighty miles over water and land in Persia, there to inquire about a permit for doing so. The alternative, he later gave me, was to fly to Bagdad.

"I had to bluff.

"The next morning I went along and told him that the flight to Bagdad was the better idea. There was a map in the vestibule and while he was inside writing out my fuel permit I roughed out the distance to Gwadar, *the next stop on my forward route to India*, and took the scale of the map on my coat sleeve.

"Later I worked out that my tankage (with the extra fuel obtained on the new permit) would leave me thirty miles to spare, that was if my gamble on fine weather came off. With that I stuck an additional four-gallon tin of petrol in my front locker, filled up my tanks and took off. To make short of a long story I was nine and a half hours in the air, nine hours out of landing distance and five hours without sight of land. My rev-counter suddenly went bung, the indicator flew back to zero, and I had a momentary hustle for my life-belt, but I landed at Gwadar safely ten minutes before dark, with petrol just on the nod to extinction.

"After a wonderful night under starlit skies I reached Karachi. Here again they tried to stick me up with results as before—I flew on and on. The same at Allahabad, on I went undeterred and arrived at my base, Purnea, to lay up for a day or two before my last hop to the foot of Everest.

"But here officialdom won. At 7 a.m. on the morning after my arrival came the local magistrate and the chief of police with the pleasant information that my plane had been seized by the government and that I would not be allowed to use it until further notice; the further notice was the arrival of the monsoon. Twenty-one days later, when this had truly arrived, my aeroplane was released.

"My next concern was to get this machine under cover. I had received an invitation from a Major Kent to visit his aerodrome some two hundred and fifty miles away; and off I flew on the first possible day. Couldn't get a kick out of the engine after being so long in alternate rain and sunshine. I know nothing about aeroplane engines, but set to work. After five hours with the instruction book I had the thing running and giving better 'revs'

than it had ever done since delivery from the makers. Then I took it on to the field. It was hopeless—the machine wouldn't rise. I know nothing about aeroplane rigging, but after some time with the rigging instruction booklet, managed to get away. Unfortunately Kent's aerodrome had no hangar accommodation and I took off to Lucknow. After half an hour's flying I was into the monsoon again with clouds at four hundred feet, and had to look for a landing. With petrol running short, could I come down?

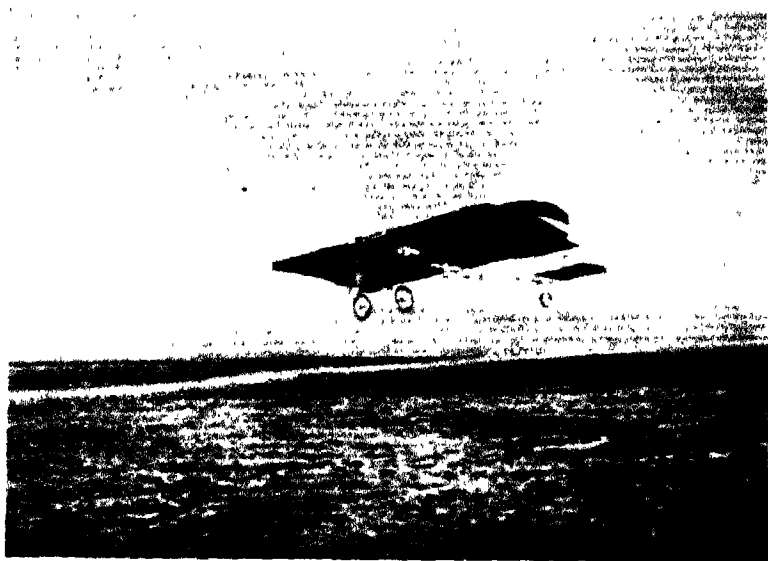
"An old planter had turned his polo ground into an aerodrome and had marked it with the circle and name of the place, ready for the time when flying should take a flip in his part of the country. I was his guest for a week on account of the weather and made a valued friend. As my machine was now of no further use to me for the Everest climb, I made him an offer. I had an intuition that he would buy it. He did.

"I came up to Darjeeling with a view to getting through on foot to Everest. Here the local government official appeared to take great pleasure in telling me that his orders were to block me. In view of these hold-ups doesn't it seem to you somewhat uncanny that I am as optimistic as ever about my job of climbing Everest, *the one I've been given to do?*"

That was the letter which Maurice Wilson sent to me from India. He concluded by asking me to try and get permission from the India Office to allow him to climb Everest alone. That could not be obtained and I advised him against the attempt. At that time only his intimates believed that he would translate his eccentric idea into practice. Everybody solemnly warned him against his project. Friends and acquaintances pointed out to him the impossibility of achieving alone what the best climbers in the world had been unable to accomplish assisted by every device known to mountaineering carried by a large force of porters—oxygen cylinders, ropes, ice axes, cooking apparatus, haversacks, medical supplies, wireless equipment and quantities of other impedimenta. His reply to all expostulations was that victory would surely come to the man who travelled fast and light. Amundsen had beaten Scott in the race to the South Pole by a lightning dash. He, like Amundsen, was perfectly fit, possessing sufficient endurance to reach the physical limits of the world's altitudes. Already men had climbed twenty-eight thousand feet of the twenty-nine thousand feet of Mount Everest, and no one should dissuade him from making his lone attempt on that last one thousand feet.

Wilson knew that the people of the Himalayas regard Everest

## THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER THE CHANNEL

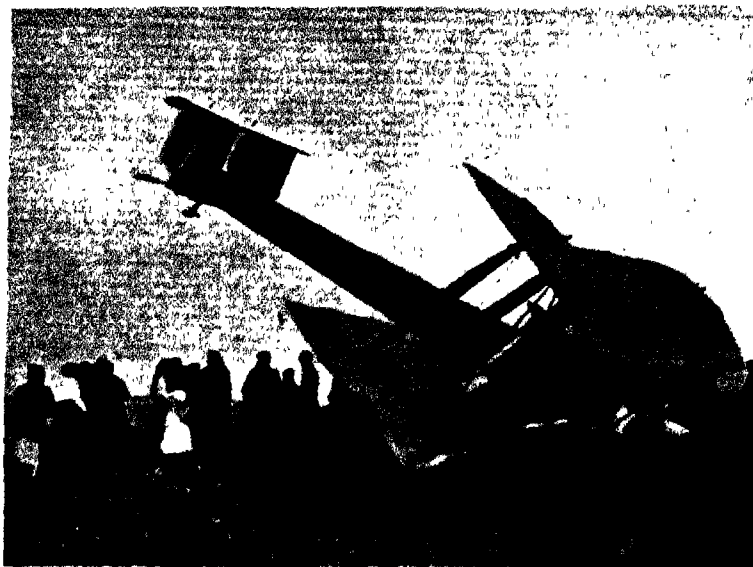
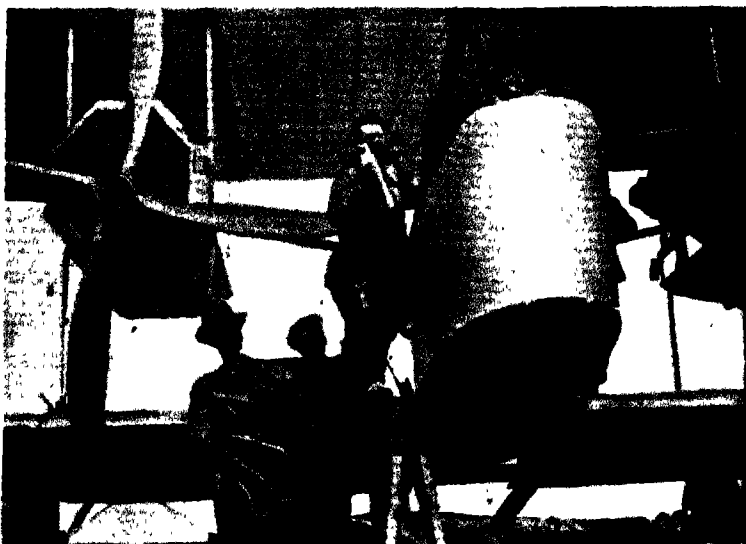


### WINGS OVER THE CHANNEL

(Top) Louis Bleriot's machine arriving at Calais before his flight.  
(Bottom) Paris welcomes Bleriot on his return from England.



## THE FIRST MEN TO FLY THE ATLANTIC



### TEN YEARS LATER

*In 1909, Bleriot flew the Channel. In 1919, the Atlantic was conquered by Captain J. Alcock and Lieutenant H. W. Brown. (Top) Alcock climbing aboard at St. John's. (Bottom) The "crash" landing.*

as holy ground just as a generation ago the Swiss so regarded their unclimbed mountains. The Swiss then assumed, as the Tibetans and Nepalese do nowadays, that the avalanches and the disasters to mountaineering parties, as well as poor harvests, were caused by unfriendly spirits inhabiting the peaks, who were enraged by man's attempt to desecrate their sacred abode. But Wilson would reason that Mont Blanc, once the monarch of mountains and thought to be inaccessible to man, was nowadays regarded as a comparatively easy climb. And the Matterhorn, not long since known as the unscalable pyramid, was now being climbed daily; indeed a guide would make two ascents up that once inaccessible peak in one day. Wilson expected to be the forerunner of similar conquests of Everest, though it was about twice the height of these Swiss mountains and situated in the most secluded country of the world. So he set forth on his astounding adventure.

When in May, 1933, he left England, the London press was welcoming home the Marquis of Clydesdale, who was the first man to fly over Everest. At that time the Ruttledge Expedition—holding a government permit—was already at the foot of the mountain engaged in its exploratory assaults. Prevented by the Indian officials from slipping in ahead of Ruttledge and scooping the honour of victory like Amundsen did from Scott at the South Pole, Wilson had to wait until 1934 for his lone attempt.

For a brief period only in each year is the mountain open to climbers—from May to July. Before May, the deep snow, the intense cold, and the blizzards which rage round the world's mother mountain provide her with natural defences that no human being can penetrate. After June the monsoon arrives, the temperature rises, the snow thaws, the sides of Everest stream with melting ice, and all footholds are obliterated as soon as they are made. Dangerous at all times it becomes a certain death trap. Anyone then attempting to scale the windswept roof of the world must inevitably be carried down to disaster by one of its ceaseless cascades of snow and ice. Though in May and June the destroying avalanches are not so frequent, the climbers must still undertake appalling climbing feats round buttresses with terrific drops and up slippery snow slopes ending in dizzy precipices, and always with the threat of being overwhelmed from above by a thunderous fall of snow.

In one of the early attempts on Everest the intrepid Mallory was swept away in an avalanche, and eight of his party were killed. He was saved because he happened to be roped to others

further up the slope. Wilson took no ropes with him up the mountain. His equipment was a small cylinder of oxygen, a height recorder, a camera to make photographs by which he proposed to prove that he had actually reached the summit, and warm clothing. He had trained himself to live on dates and cereals.

After being released from what was virtual arrest in Purnea, he promised not to attempt a flight to the base of Everest. But he made a significant move to Darjeeling, the usual starting place of an Everest expedition where, without acquainting the authorities, he engaged a few porters. News presently reached London that in the disguise of a porter he had slipped out of Darjeeling *en route* for Everest. He was certainly travelling light. The Ruttledge Expedition of the previous year had comprised fourteen British officers, ninety porters and three hundred baggage animals. Wilson had three porters only. Travelling from Darjeeling by forced night marches, he crossed the Sikkim Himalayas without being recognized. Safely in Tibet, he now changed back into European clothing for, unless there were sudden direct orders from Lhasa, which was unlikely, there was now no likelihood of his being stopped and turned back. In fact he was travelling so fast that no transport in that desolate region could have overtaken him.

By April 18 he reached the first stage of his assault, the famous Rongbuk monastery, outpost of civilization, beating by ten days the thirty-five days taken by last year's expedition. This was in itself a remarkable feat seeing that part of the route had to be covered at night for fear of detection. He was glad to reach the Rongbuk monastery, which has more than once befriended the foemen of Everest. Occupied by three hundred monks, and over sixteen thousand feet up, it is about the highest habitation in the world. Wilson tarried one day only at the monastery. Refreshed and encouraged, he pushed on up the mountain to what was the Base Camp of 1933. From here the summit of Everest appears to be a triangular pyramid, the downward dip of which very much resembles the tiles on a steep roof. There are few handholds; careful and balanced climbing is necessary to avoid a sheer drop of nearly ten thousand feet. These tiles or slabs continue down to a great ridge which runs north-west at a considerable angle.

Scarcely giving himself time to rest, Wilson continued upwards to Camp One, a delightful elevated spot providing glorious views, one of which, the Purnori Pyramid, rising sharply above a circle of peaks, suggests the upthrusting tooth of some gigantic tiger.

His next stop, Camp Two, took him nearly two thousand feet

higher to a sunny spot protected from severe winds by ice ridges, but with the temperature many degrees below zero. Already well above the levels of the Swiss mountain peaks, he now resumed his ascent through troughs of ice with the winds blowing the snow from the crests of the open glacier about him. Again he came to rest in an enchanted land of ice towers—blue and white pinnacles—surrounded by lofty peaks urging him still higher into the blue of heaven. He was now nearing an altitude of twenty-three thousand feet beyond which, only a few years ago, no man had ever climbed.

Immediately above him there now rose the steep and shining ice wall of the North Col, that tragic glacier which forms a saddle joining the north peak with the shoulders and summit of Everest. Discovered by Mallory more than ten years ago, it provides the only negotiable route to the top. It was on this North Col that the avalanche occurred which swept eight porters to their doom.

When the tired coolies of the 1933 expedition caught sight of the North Col they burst into a song of joy. For the ascent to its base is hard going and some of the grumblers had suggested giving in. But a few stern words from their leader stimulated them to further effort and they reached camp.

Here the view is not quite so thrilling as further down, for the main bulk of Everest is masked by the towering Col and the north peak. But the scene is an inspiring one for, says Rutledge, after the last slopes have been taken "with heads down and the senses dulled by altitude" there appears the north-east shoulder, six thousand feet of slab and avalanche-swept valley, beyond which, on the right "is a rock-strewn cone, flying a long pennant of cloud and snow far across Nepal. It is the summit. At long last Mount Everest is tangible, no longer the fabric of dreams and visions." Just below the peak lie a heap of stones which are seen to be really huge boulders, fifteen feet high, dislodged from the summit.

Wilson eagerly surveyed the goal of his ambitions and prepared to resume his climb. His three porters looked apprehensively at the terrible North Col over whose saddle they must approach that mighty peak, and their courage gave way. Mallory, dauntless pioneer of this glacier, had found it necessary to be supported by ropes wound round a rock as he climbed an ice chimney to the top of that obstacle. Those other intrepid mountaineers who had followed him had all been similarly supported. The porters were quite prepared for the ascent . . . with the same kind of support. But without ropes they would proceed no further.

Wilson expostulated! Vainly did he argue that so far all had

gone well, and that the omens were propitious for the future. Resolutely they refused. Though they had already broken speed records for climbing more than two-thirds of the terrible mountain, they feared to face certain death on that almost perpendicular North Col. It was still six weeks or more before the monsoon could arrive, but Wilson would not wait for further equipment. He had set out to climb Everest alone, and alone he would go. If his strength held he might reach the top in two or three more days and be back in four or five. He ordered his three porters to wait for a fortnight; if by then he had not reappeared they were free and could return to India.

On May 17, 1934, in a temperature of perhaps fifty degrees below zero, he resumed his ascent, carrying with him three loaves, two tins of porridge, a small tent, a camera, and the inevitable Union Jack. Those who know Everest say that he had no chance; he must perish from cold and hunger or crash to death over a precipice. Never before had two men roped together been able to accomplish what he was expecting to achieve alone. Oates in the Antarctic, leaving Scott and stumbling out alone into the blizzard, may have done a nobler action than Wilson's; but for bravery there was no distinction between them.

Wilson's three porters watched him toiling upwards until he was lost from sight in the ice cones above. For days their gaze constantly sought that triangular peak above them. Would this mad sahib suddenly emerge from the valley and appear silhouetted against the blue sky on the ridge above? They waited for a week, by which time, as no sign had appeared, they thought that his chances of life had dwindled to vanishing point. But they knew his courage and his qualities of endurance and were not easily disillusioned. Perhaps he had found some of the stores left behind by the previous expedition and was taking the climb more leisurely than he had first intended.

A fortnight passed and never a sign of the lone climber. They were now at liberty to return. No ordinary human being could hope to have lived alone on that mountain for a fortnight. But this Englishman was no ordinary man. He had talked about the miraculous powers of the *yogi-men*, and he was one of them. Perhaps he was being supernaturally sustained. That mysterious companion who had accompanied Smythe last year might even now be supporting their own leader and guiding him to the summit there in triumph to plant his little coloured flag.

Another week passed, and yet another. It was only after they

had waited a full month that, with the monsoon nearly due, they decided to forsake the mountain and their intrepid leader. They gathered up their scanty equipment and returned to Darjeeling. Here they confessed to the authorities that they had participated in an unauthorized attempt on Everest and had last seen Wilson following the tracking of Ruttledge up the mountain. There was now no possibility of his being alive.

Some time later the mystery of Wilson's disappearance was solved by Eric Shipton, leader of an Everest advance party, who had been with Smythe in 1933. Wilson's body was lying unprotected in the snow. He had not died of hunger, for he had contrived to discover the provisions left by Ruttledge. But his little tent had been blown away and was found at some distance from the body; and this would suggest that, utterly exhausted, he may have been unable to go further and had frozen to death. Eric Shipton buried the body in a crevasse near the spot where it was found. Wilson's diary, found with him, was brought back to Darjeeling.

Thus perished one of the most gallant adventurers this generation has produced. If it had been possible for a man climbing alone to have conquered Everest, Wilson was undoubtedly the one to have done it. He gave his life to the mountain in a blind attempt to achieve the impossible.

# THE FIRST FLIGHT OVER THE CHANNEL

*By*  
A. J. RUSSELL

“**M**AN will never fly” pronounced the wise ones of our youth. They spoke with conviction just as their fathers had done for thousands of years. Yet they had themselves seen the coming of the motor car, whose petrol engine was destined to make early flights possible and the ultimate conquest of the air a certainty.

There were nevertheless some enthusiasts who disagreed with them. One of these, a young Frenchman named Louis Blériot, experimented for twenty years before staggering the world with a spectacular flight. He it was who first showed that men could not only pilot toy flying-machines round a field for the entertainment of a dumbfounded public, but could fly them through the stratosphere at terrific speed from town to town, country to country.

Caught by the romantic spell of aeronautics, this Frenchman, in his prime, was the man chosen by destiny to prove to England, friendly but hopelessly insular, that she was no longer an island divorced from Europe, inaccessible without permission of the all-powerful British Navy.

Across the Atlantic, in those pioneer days, was another personality, a Yankee farmer, who too had no doubt that flight was possible. Looking up sometimes from his fields he would see two cycle-makers, the Wright brothers, piloting their first heavier-than-air flying machine, would grin knowingly “at them lads at their capers again” and continue his ploughing! But that was five years before the world knew of Blériot, though the Frenchman had himself been experimenting for years.

About this time an American reporter who had been sent to spy on the Wright brothers, wired to New York a message which made the editor and his staff jump out of their seats. But they relaxed, smiled, sat down again. This news was altogether too fantastic, even for a New York newspaper. The epoch-making telegram announcing man’s greatest mechanical achievement, a machine that could fly without a balloon to support it, was “spiked” and the enterprising reporter, who had secured the

"scoop" of the age, was censured for drawing news from his imagination!

A year or two passed and England heard that the Wright brothers had made a successful flight before the heads of the United States Forces, but remained incredulous. In France, Blériot, Farman, and other dauntless pioneers, continued their experiments.

One of the lads who had caused the American farmer to shake his head at their antics, now crossed to Europe and, after many delays and disappointments which aroused interest to a tremendous pitch of excitement, made an impressive flight in France. At last a sceptical world was beginning to believe that there might be something in this notion of a flying machine.

The Wright brothers offered their patents to the British Admiralty and War Office. They were rejected by these august bodies for the clear and simple reason that our fighting services had no need of flying machines! England was an island protected by her navy. This new fantastic talk about future danger from the air—ridiculous! What man in his senses believed that these flimsy contraptions, now hopping about the first aerodromes, would ever be capable of flying over water, to say nothing of that twenty-two mile stretch between Calais and Dover which had effectively baffled Napoleon? All very reminiscent of the official talk in the days when young Hiram Maxim vainly hawked his quick-firing gun round Whitehall, only to be driven at last to medieval Russia because the armies of England, and indeed those of the other European countries, had no use for his amazing new weapon, which later did such devastation in the Great War.

Yet Blériot, beaten in the race for the production of the first machine that could fly, continued his experiments. Since flight was possible it would be achieved by more than one type of aeroplane. Already there were many types of motor cars on the road. Soon there would be many types of aeroplanes in the air. The Wright biplane that hummed over a little aerodrome might be the first, it certainly would not be the last word in flight.

Blériot was an inventor of middle age and middle height. He was dark, with kind eyes and a long drooping moustache which, in later life, he shortened. He was a man of few words, often one word only—"magnifique!"

He followed the activities of the Wrights and the other designers with great interest. He did not join the chorus of criticism which the Wrights aroused. Their achievement was "magnifique!" Yet Blériot was a far better craftsman. The radiator on his monoplane



was such a finished piece of workmanship that it might have been made not by an engineer but by a watchmaker! Critics of the Wrights said that their work was slipshod. There was a hole in the canvas of their biplane; the fabric was secured to the spars by an old bootlace. Yet the machines that Blériot was building, though neatly finished in all detail, were also flimsy contraptions. They looked just stick and wire; their undercarriages were made from bicycle wheels.

Blériot's machine was intentionally flimsy. His big idea, like that of a certain manufacturer of motor cars, was to achieve both lightness and speed. Others were pinning their faith to biplanes and three-deckers, but Blériot, after trying all types, decided in favour of the monoplane which, because it had only one cutting edge to the wind, must be the aeroplane of the future. But the fatalities among the earlier pioneers were terrible; the slower biplane seemed to be safer than the monoplane; and for the first twenty-five years of flight it seemed that Blériot's preference for the monoplane was wrong. The single-spread air liners crossing the Atlantic today prove that he was right.

Blériot prophesied, too, that trans-Atlantic air liners would have detachable wings. If forced down these would disengage as the machine struck the ocean, allowing the body of the plane, constructed as an unsinkable lifeboat, to proceed under its own power to its destination. But that idea is still in the air, or to be exact, not yet there.

It took Blériot many years to evolve a small, simple, well-proved flying machine which he could trust implicitly to do what was generally thought impossible—fly the Straits of Dover. He began with man-carrying gliders which, resting on floats, were roped to speed boats sent racing down the Seine. When great speed had been attained, these gliders would leave their floats on the water and carry their pilot into the air, where many odd things happened to him. For this was a far more difficult proceeding than operating a man-carrying kite. The taut rope of the speed boat prevented him from playing his glider as he could a kite, with its loose rope, and so it was impossible to prevent the glider from plunging. Consequently Blériot's first engineless aeroplanes were always turning turtle and precipitating him upside down into the river Seine.

Moreover, when the dive into water occurred, as it did daily, he would be dragged along at terrific speed for nearly a minute before the speed boat could be stopped. Yet this rigorous schooling

taught him more than he would have learned by taking off from the hill tops. When those initial experiments were ended he knew more about automatic stability than anybody then living.

So when he attached screws and engines to his skeleton aeroplanes, he made rapid progress and soon began scudding over the land. But that was not flying. Many more difficulties were encountered before his little petrol engine was able to raise his aeroplanes off the ground. When they did so there began for Blériot another series of adventures the like of which has not been matched in the history of flight. Almost every day, for weeks on end, this fearless pioneer was constantly crashing and escaping from sudden death.

He was building faster machines than his rivals, and so everything that happened to him did so with alarming suddenness. He would shoot into the air at great speed and return to earth at a still faster pace. Always was he falling and crawling out from the debris of a ruined invention to go dauntlessly forth and design yet another and more reliable machine. Never was there a courageous man more impatient to conquer.

But pioneer flying was expensive and nobody would advance money for such hare-brained schemes. What money he had came from another invention, a motor car searchlight, fed by a current produced by a generator drawn off the engine.

Expecting to make a fortune from flying machines, he founded the first aeroplane factory in France. He himself made the first notable flight by a monoplane, and secured the cross-country record for any kind of aeroplane by covering a distance, with one stop in between, of nearly sixty miles. About this time an Englishman named Curtis flew for an hour without leaving the air.

By 1909 flights over land were becoming impressive. Yet so far nobody had achieved startling success over the sea. One of our newspaper peers offered a prize of one thousand pounds for the first flight across the Channel and ten thousand pounds for a trans-Atlantic triumph. This attempt to exploit the new science for journalistic purposes was ridiculed, and one rival newspaper, with no faith in flying machines, offered a million pounds for a flight to America.

Yet the British public demanded spectacular flights, for England had lagged behind France and America in air adventure. So far only a few Englishmen had even seen an aeroplane; to see one in flight would be the supreme entertainment. Someone demanded a prize for the first flight over London and this was vetoed because

it would be dangerous—to London! But this argument could not be used against a flight over the historic Channel, which offered risks to airmen, but none to spectators.

Channel swimmers were very much in the public eye at that time; indeed a sure way of inscribing one's name on the scroll of fame, and incidentally of getting plenty of popularity, was to swim the Straits of Dover. Therefore no greater thrill could be offered to the British public in July, 1909 than the spectacle of an aeroplane—one of those new-fangled contraptions which most people had never seen—flying across the narrow straits which had defeated Napoleon.

Three men decided to be the first to do it. The astonishing fact is that all three were Frenchmen. True, an Englishman, the Hon. C. S. Rolls, was the first man to make the double flight—Dover to Calais and back. I remember seeing him set out on one of his attempts and crash his machine because the public obstructed his take-off. But there were no Englishmen in the lists for the first attempts on the Channel.

The three pioneers were the Comte de Lambert, the amusing Latham, and—Blériot. Latham was a temperamental Latin, an excitable and rather unlucky showman. He made the initial attempt, and made all England smile at him for his habit of being rescued from the Channel smoking a cigarette as he sat in his gradually-submerging plane.

Blériot had not the volatility of the artistic Latham. He was the level-headed, self-confident craftsman, a man of dogged unflagging courage. Yet he had not intended to make an attempt on the Channel at that time, for he had thought a Channel flight suicidal and a fall into the water certain death.

Hearing that the mercurial Latham's *Antoinette* had been picked up and that a new machine was being made ready for the flight, Blériot, the opportunist, saw his chance. He packed up his latest monoplane—it was his eleventh—and sent it to Calais. The first flight was still very much a gamble, with the odds on the Channel. Not that his machine was incapable but that no aeroplane engine could be relied upon. Farman said that if he could induce one of his engines to run for five minutes in the air without stopping he considered himself the luckiest man alive.

The engines used by those pioneers of aviation would do the most unexpected things. Sometimes they would lose their propellers, or their cylinders would blow off in mid-air; sometimes they would—as one did with Latham—part company from the

aeroplane and fall to the ground, leaving the luckless pilot to descend as best he could on the tail end of his machine. Yet the news of Latham's Channel exploits had whipped up the public interest to fever heat. If now somebody succeeded in piloting a machine safely across he was assured of a reception in England unexampled since the days of the Restoration.

It was a strange looking little machine that Blériot took with him to Calais; much frailer and less beautiful than those *Antoinettes* which Latham had been using. The aviator had no illusion as to how it would behave if it came down in the water: it must have broken up in a few minutes. Yet the machine was built on sound lines, very much the shape and rather like a skeleton, of the modern air liner. The wings of this monoplane spread out fourteen feet from a body shaped something like a skiff. The planes were six feet wide and curved. The machine was guided by elevating planes and a rudder in the rear, both controlled, as today, by a joystick which, drawn back, sent the aeroplane aloft and, pushed forward, brought it down. Waggle horizontally to left or right the joy-stick took the machine in its own direction.

The special feature of the monoplane was the provision in the body, at the back of the airman, of an air chamber filled with gas which, Blériot calculated, would keep him afloat for five minutes, and thus give the destroyers following his flight a chance to come up and rescue him. Luckily, he had no need to use it, for at the later stages he was half-an-hour away from anything floating that might have rescued him.

On July 24, 1909, Blériot met Latham and proposed that neither of them should start until the other was ready, but Latham dissented. Blériot then made up his mind. If at all possible he would start early next day. But weather reports were unpropitious. In those days it was thought that flight in a wind was impossible, and there was going to be a wind.

There was another reason why Blériot should delay no longer in making his effort. Though no one knew it beside himself and his wife, he had got down to his last penny. If he could get safely across the Channel he would pick up £1,000 from an English newspaper, and the excitement which must follow should bring him enough money to start a flying school, and to produce monoplanes which he expected to sell in thousands.

That Sunday morning the weather looked so uninviting that Latham's colleagues decided not to call him. No one in his senses would dare to make a flight. They let him sleep on. But his

most dangerous rival was early astir. Long before sunrise he was out at Les Barraques village. The few reporters present said that he looked cool and inflexible. Mme. Blériot and all the villagers turned out to watch the attempt, albeit, as there had been so many false alarms, they were without much confidence of seeing the start of an historic flight. There were white rollers visible on the black sea below them, and these were ominous. But now the weather experts came forward with news that a lull was noticeable. Blériot brought out his machine and, in the grey dawn, took off for a trial flight of a quarter of an hour's duration. Alighting, he pronounced that his monoplane was behaving satisfactorily.

The sky was overcast. Had the sun risen? The terms of the newspaper offer were that the flight must take place between sunrise and sunset. Seated in his cockpit Blériot peered forward into the misty horizon and waited. Meanwhile Mme. Blériot had gone aboard the destroyer *Escolette* which was to follow him, for he was determined to make the attempt. Something must be done to get back that last penny.

"Is it sunrise?" asked Blériot.

The official looked at his watch.

"Sunrise," he said.

Blériot started his engine.

"Where's Dover?" he demanded. The official pointed to a grey cloud on the skyline.

His propeller flickered and began to whirl. Presently his machine wobbled along the strip of grassland above the sand dunes. In fifty yards he was in the air. A hand shot out from the cockpit and waved a farewell to the cheering villagers. The machine climbed inland and then, looking no bigger than the dragon-fly to which all newspapers likened it, sped away on its epoch-making flight.

On any ordinary July morning England is clearly visible from Calais, but this morning all that the watchers could see through their telescopes was a disappearing speck in the leaden sky, and the destroyers below, belching smoke as they first led and then followed this fearless airman on his lone flight to England.

The observers knew as well as did Blériot that if his machine was to succeed his engine must keep running for over half-an-hour. Hitherto it had not succeeded in going at high speed for more than twenty minutes. It is said that this air-cooled engine, after it had gone for this length of time, became overheated and Blériot's plane began to drop into the Channel. Then,

by the greatest piece of good-fortune, he ran into a squall which, cooling his engine, allowed him to climb again until his altitude was higher than the cliffs of Dover. What was still more interesting about this engine was the fact, announced twenty years later by Sir Sefton Brancker, director of Civil Aviation, that never before had it run for the thirty-three minutes it took to traverse the Straits of Dover, and that it never ran so long again. As he set out that morning from France Blériot was certainly risking his life.

Though for days Dover had been full of eager people waiting to see the Channel flown for the first time, most of them left, a little hoarse and dispirited, when they saw Latham's non-success. Even the newspaper men were caught by surprise. After days of ceaseless watching from the summit of Dover cliffs the news correspondents—Edgar Wallace among them—were soundly sleeping in their hotels below. Not one of them appears to have been out of doors to observe the arrival, save a friend of Blériot, the correspondent of a French newspaper, who had arranged to wave a tricolour from the cliffs as a sign to the aviator, so that he could easily find the pre-arranged landing place. And the airman needed some friends round him when he alighted, for, through the escape of petrol from his tank, he had burnt his foot rather badly, and was only able to walk with the help of a stick. When he rose that morning he was in great pain and had used crutches to get to his machine. Even if he alighted safely in England somebody must help him out of his plane.

No conqueror ever came more humbly to his conquest. To his wife below, his machine, flying at about three hundred feet, against the cliffs of Dover looked like linen on a clothes line; but to those who saw it afterwards it was soiled and weather-beaten, the worse for so many test flights that it had undergone before its final triumph.

Having no compass aboard, none of the instruments which make flying today almost simple, Blériot flew on, and presently was observed by a policeman, a coastguard or two, a man on the pier, some soldiers and just a few others, to be drawing near to England. He did not appear to be flying steadily, for the winds were buffeting him, and it would seem that he was having a hard fight to make the land.

The Fleet had just returned to Dover from Southend, and the *Bonaventure*, with her brood of submarines, had taken shelter from the winds behind the crooked arm of Dover's breakwater. It was

said that Blériot came, "with his machine under his arm, between the dawn and the daylight," though that kind of picturesque language is not usually associated with the British Navy.

That grey cloud to the west, towards which Blériot had been flying, had now taken a sea-green colour, and was in fact Shakespeare Cliff, part of the white cliffs of Dover.

Over the little monoplane there fluttered a red flag which might show above the water if the airman fell into it; and this flag was plainly visible to the few who saw him making for the land. The breakwater and the curving pier came out to meet him, but behind them he saw a town of a thousand houses, of spires and chimneys, a jumble of roofs in a valley overlooked by the grim walls of Dover Castle. To descend there meant disaster. He was seen to leave the sleeping town and turn again towards St. Margaret's, by which direction he had come, and presently he passed in over the cliff's edge and disappeared behind the castle. Less than a dozen men had seen him arrive!

On the seaward edge is the golf links, a little further on are the red buildings of the Duke of York's School. Innocent of trees, or other obstructions likely to embarrass an airman, the Downs here made a suitable spot for the descent though further on a more level stretch might have been found. It was five o'clock in the morning when the bird-man crossed the cliff's edge heading for the Northfall Meadow. The peculiar rapid whirr of the propeller was plainly heard by M. Fontaine, Blériot's friend who, standing on the cliff, vigorously waved his tricolour in welcome. Blériot had already seen it and gave an acknowledging wave of his hand.

Droning and humming like a colony of bees he came at a reduced speed over the wire fence dividing the cliff path from the meadow, making for a gently sloping bank. But there were eddies in the wind and they caused him to alter his course again. He drew back his lever, climbed, circled above the long valley that divides the meadow, to Castle Hill, over which blew a stiff wind from the sea. Easing his descent as best he could he alighted on the spot now marked with a memorial slab for all the world to see.

It was not a good landing. The propeller was damaged by thrusting into the hill and the tail stuck upwards at an angle. Blériot, unwilling to get out himself, sat still, gazing about him, a lonely conqueror of the air, greeted only by the seabirds.

His compatriot, carrying his flag, came running across from

the cliff path. He threw his arms about his victorious friend and gave him a Latin embrace. A police cyclist rode over and joined in the first few moments of triumph. Soldiers in khaki ran out of the fort and for a while this little group were all there were to welcome him to England.

But the sleeping town was beginning to stir. Dover began to dress itself and blink at the sun as it broke through. Journalists, unwashed and unshaven, ran out of their hotels and drove up to the Downs to see the wondrous machine that had triumphed, and to interview the victorious pilot. They saw a man dressed rather like an Esquimaux. He wore a khaki jacket lined with wool for warmth over tweed clothes and beneath an engineer's blue cotton overalls. A close-fitting cloth cap was tightly fastened over his head, neck and ears. He had taken neither food nor drink of any kind since the previous evening and, now that the excitement was over, and his lungs filled with sea air, he was feeling ready for his breakfast.

He was driven down to Dover and entertained. All through the day he was the lion of the town. Besieged by journalists and innumerable admirers he told, and retold, the simple story of his achievement.

A successful flight, like an uninterrupted railway journey, is usually so lacking in incident, that there is very little to record. For which reason one seldom if ever reads a good story of a notable achievement in the air. A pilot may run into a storm over the Alps, may dodge an eagle in the north, may see the sharks in the Indian Ocean, but unless he crashes into a hillside, or comes down in flames, there is not much story, as story, of the actual passage to write about.

It was so with the first crossing of the Channel. Blériot told the journalists that he preferred the honour of being the first man to fly the Channel to winning a prize of £1,000. After so many mishaps he had promised his wife that he would not make this hazardous attempt; he changed his mind and his wife encouraged him to do so. Then, at 4.35, he had taken off.

As he left the shores of France he reduced the speed of his engine, for there was no need to force it unduly, and indeed it was dangerous to do so. He felt no sensations and was rather surprised that he did not even feel exultant. The tumbling sea beneath him and the freshening breeze warned him that if anything went wrong with his engine life might not be quite so pleasant as it felt at that moment.



He had a sense of loneliness but of nothing else. Clearly he was not afraid. To be alone, unguided, without compass, driving towards a grey bank of cloud, with the Channel heaving below him, was, on reflection, an odd experience. Yet at first he had nothing to do. The engine was going well. He touched nothing with hands or feet. During the first ten minutes he neither rose nor fell.

As soon as he was in the air he could see the destroyer ahead of him. As she was to steam to Dover he took his bearings from her. Though she was going at full speed he quickly passed her, going comfortably at forty-five miles per hour, the propeller of his twenty-five horse power engine—about the power of a car—doing one thousand two hundred to one thousand four hundred revolutions a minute.

When his engine dipped he pumped in some more petrol and the machine rose again. It was his intention to fly at two hundred and fifty feet, which should take him safely to his landing place. The greatest altitude to which his machine could reach would be about five hundred feet as against the twenty-five thousand at which military operations normally take place in the R.A.F. today.

Having overtaken the destroyer he was able to look back and take his bearings from the direction in which it was steaming, but he could only do this for about ten minutes. Then she was lost to sight and the land in both directions was also invisible. So he set his steering gear for the point in which he had last seen the destroyer heading, and hoped on.

During the next ten minutes he experienced the most anxious part of the flight for there was nothing in sight but the sea and the sky, and he was not absolutely certain of his direction. Yet he had no fear of his machine, which was travelling beautifully. Then he sighted land but found that he was travelling in the direction of Deal whilst his intention had been to get to Dover. He headed westward, following the line of the coast for a mile or more, saw the Fleet and the harbour below him, then spotted his friend Fontaine, and made towards him.

But now he found himself in some difficulty for the wind was much stronger and his speed reduced. He fought against it and his beautiful aeroplane, as he called it, responded to his command. He hoped to cross Dover Harbour before passing over Shakespeare Cliff. Again the wind was contrary and, seeing the opening in the cliff, he passed over the land. The English Channel had been flown.

Yet he felt confident that his machine, which had been in the air for half-an-hour, could continue flying for another hour, back to Calais, or on to London, had he so chosen. But he had done enough for one day. He was across the Channel, and here was the spot where he had arranged to land.

Avoiding the red buildings on his left he attempted to come down. Safe descent was always the greatest problem. Blériot found that the wind was carrying him round again and he decided to take no more chances with it. At once he shut off his motor, which he did a little too soon, with the result that the monoplane fell straight down, instead of with a gradual glide, from a height of sixty-five feet! He was lucky that his petrol did not set alight his machine and himself!

Yet no serious harm was done. Blériot surveyed the damage and pronounced that it could be put right again in a few days.

One of London's biggest store-keepers, motoring in the neighbourhood of Dover that Sunday, drove up to look at the machine that had conquered the Channel. With characteristic enterprise he arranged to exhibit it next day in the basement of his store and to pay £200 to the London Hospital for the privilege. The machine was photographed, packed on rail, sent to Cannon Street station; and next day London was crowding into a department store to see the machine which was monopolizing the talk of the whole world.

Before that happened news had been wirelessly back to Les Barraques that the flight was successful. It was told to Latham who went into a frenzy of disappointment. He had jumped out of bed at about the time Blériot landed, and was preparing his machine to take off when news came that the Channel had been flown! He demanded: "Would you believe it? They have literally robbed me of my chance. Can and will you believe it? My friends, who are as anxious for me to get to England as I am myself, failed to call me!"

He heard the crowd cheering "Vive Blériot" and he joined in more heartily than any, for unlucky Latham was a great sportsman. "It was the chance of a lifetime for Blériot," he cried, "and he took it! That half-an-hour's break in the wind this morning would have enabled me to cross. Nevertheless I shall try to follow Blériot and go as far inland as possible; then I shall re-cross to France. Blériot is a plucky man as he is a lucky man. I have just sent him a telegram: 'Sincere congratulations. Hope to follow you. Latham.'"

But the wind was blowing half a gale and the *Antoinette*, towed into a field developed faults in her motors. By the time these were put right the wind had increased to a fury. Latham took his seat but twelve men had to hold the aeroplane down. Even a trial flight was impossible. So far as July 25, 1909, was concerned there was no chance of Latham joining his rival in Dover. Yet had he done so Blériot was prepared to have shared with him the prize-money he had won. With head bent and his hands clasped behind him, Latham set off across the fields to Sangette, a pathetic, disappointed figure.

Latham did make another attempt but was again frustrated when within sight of Dover. Always dogged by misfortune, he met his death in the Congo.

His luckier rival had been having a great time, adulated by everybody, including the Comte de Lambert, who was then in Dover. When asked where he would like his plane housed before it was taken to London he suggested a dog-kennel. But it was not taken off the field without an encounter with imperturbable officialdom. Among the earliest arrivals were the Customs authorities, who made solemn enquiries and assured themselves that none of the laws regulating the entrance of goods to these shores had been broken. Blériot was listed as "master" of an unnamed ship described as a monoplane.

That Sunday evening Blériot returned to Calais and received a boisterous welcome from his fellow countrymen. France at that moment was undergoing one of its frequent changes of Government, but the aerial news was so exciting that politics became unimportant. The Cross of the Legion of Honour was immediately conferred upon the airman and the Parliamentary Aviation Group sent him a wire: "To Blériot, first conqueror of the Channel, and to Latham and the other conquerors of the air—Hosannah for the peace of the world."

Special Sunday evening editions of the Paris newspapers set the city agog. One of them said that "the day on which the Channel was crossed for the first time was a date in history that could not be removed from the annals of science and civilization." Another said that the Straits, which were so wide at the time of Napoleon's camp at Boulogne, but which had since narrowed by a development of steamships and submarines, were now practically filled in! From a diplomatic point of view the consequences were evident. The British foreign policy of splendid isolation would become more and more a Continental policy. For Great Britain

was no more an impregnable fortress from which she could intervene at will in European wars. Very soon she would be vulnerable, like her allies.

The English Press said that Blériot was fortunate in his audacity in choosing the right moment to sail with supreme dominion through the azure deep of air and regretted that no Englishman had come forward to make the attempt. While Blériot was applauded they reminded the world that one swallow did not make a summer and that the first passage of one aeroplane was not likely to be followed by the general public travelling by air. The Channel steamboat service was not yet threatened!

On the day following his flight, Blériot was officially welcomed both in Dover and London. "Bravo Blériot" and "Vive la France" were shouted to him as he drove through the streets of London. Our War Minister at the time was Lord Haldane, who said that the flight was one of those feats which marked the beginning of a new era. "You did it with such wonderful ease because you had such great courage!"

Responding to the felicitations Blériot said that he had put a great deal of work into his machine and so made success easy. He hoped that France and England, already united by water, would now be united by air. That evening, at a public dinner, he was the only one present who was not wearing a dress suit. He laughingly explained that he had forgotten to put it in his aeroplane.

Soon afterwards he took part in another competitive flight in France, and, as before, his machine crashed, and he crawled out from the ruins safe once more.

From then onwards he did very little flying. But he built many aeroplanes, especially during the war. Altogether he designed two hundred and built ten thousand. In one of these he flew to England twenty years after his first flight, and re-visited the scene of his landing. Again he was welcomed in Dover and London, this time by Lord Thompson, Air Minister, and by other celebrities, most of whom were shortly to lose their lives in the disaster to R101.

But Blériot's luck held out to the end. He died in 1936, one of the few pioneers of aviation to reach a ripe age and to die a natural death.

# THE MAN WHO HAD TO BE KING

*By*

W. B. SEABROOK

**T**o hold undisputed sway on some remote tropical island set like a green jewel amid the coral reefs of summer seas—how many boys have dreamed it, and how many grown men, civilization-tired.

It is a strangely potent dream; it has a druglike fascination. It is susceptible of infinite variations. Sometimes the island proves to be inhabited by natives—sometimes not. One man may dream of it in terms of pure adventure—another in terms of refuge, tranquillity, escape—another in terms of despotic power.

It is a dream which for most of us never comes true.

But in Haiti, where the impossible frequently happens—or rather on one of its island dependencies—there is a man, a white man, who has realized that dream, on his own terms. Furthermore, he has been actually crowned a king by the natives of that island.

This is not a fantasy.

On clear days, from any terrace in Port-au-Prince, one may see the blue mountain peaks of an island rising from the sea out yonder across the bay north-westward, thirty or more miles distant. It is called La Gonave. It is an island larger than Martinique or Barbados, dolphin-shaped, some forty miles in length. Despite its proximity to the Haitian mainland and capital, despite the fact that under the Haitian-American treaty of 1915 it is part of the territory over which America exercises a benevolent protectorate, it remains the most primitive and untouched by civilization in the whole West Indies. It has always been so. It is the only part of Haiti on which there were no colonial settlements and on which there are no French colonial ruins. In the pre-colonial Spanish days it was a resort for pirates. When Haiti was owned by France, it was a refuge for runaway slaves. For the past century, under the Haitian black republic, the government tried sporadically and with slight success to collect taxes from the descendants of these runaway slaves.

A number of years ago, at their own request, the American administration dropped from an aeroplane on to this island a Pennsylvania farmer boy by the name of Wirkus, who had enlisted

in the marine corps and risen to be a top sergeant. They commissioned him a lieutenant of gendarmerie and said, "We'll send a 'plane over every month to see how you are getting along." They said also, "In six months, of course, we'll relieve you." This boy Wirkus who had never set foot on La Gonave, who had only seen it lying distant and mysterious out there across the sea, said, "If you won't let me stay there for at least three years, I don't want to go." It was a queer thing for him to say. They thought it was a queer thing for him to say, but they flew him over and left him. They sent the aeroplane monthly for his reports, and whenever he cared to, they let him fly back, to spend a monthly weekend in Port-au-Prince. Usually he didn't care to leave this island. Two or three months later a rumour spread around the capital that the ten thousand blacks of the island had convened and crowned Wirkus king of La Gonave. It was supposed to be a sort of harmless joke. Nobody on the mainland took it seriously. And Wirkus himself laughed about it in an embarrassed way when they saw him. He was a husky, efficient, dependable lieutenant of gendarmerie, his reports were always in perfect order, and tax collections on La Gonave had already more than doubled under his administration. If the blacks out there childishly chose to call him a king instead of a lieutenant, what did his superior officers care about that? He was a good man, doing a good job.

And he has been there ever since. He is there today, the sole white ruler, the benevolent despot of an island inhabited by ten thousand blacks. He will be there, he hopes, for another three years. I had a letter from him only a few weeks ago. He is real and his name is Wirkus. If it would amuse you to get a letter from a king, you can write him:

LIEUTENANT F. E. WIRKUS,  
Gendarmerie d'Haiti;  
Headquarters General,  
Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

(Please forward to La Gonave.)

They will take it over to him when the 'plane goes, on the first of the month, and I have no doubt he will find time to answer.

These are the simple understandable facts, as known to everybody in Haiti, of how Wirkus happens to be king of La Gonave. It chances, however, that I am in possession of some other facts, literal, yet so fantastic in their implication that I hesitate to relate them. Astrologers, numerologists, dabblers in the occult, orthodox

fatalist Presbyterians, will be more interested in this phase of the story than will sensible readers. I feel, however, that it should be included, if only to show what mysterious tricks coincidence will sometimes play in the birth of incredible legends, in the creation by primitive peoples of kings and gods.

In the year 1838, after Haiti had been for thirty years a republic, a negro named Soulouque rose to power. He declared that the Holy Virgin had appeared to him in a vision, angel-winged, perched in the top of a royal palm, and had said :

"You are destined to become a king, to rule over Haiti, Santo Domingo, and the surrounding islands of the sea."

Some months later, Soulouque, amid great pomp and ceremony, invested with sceptre, crown, and royal robes, was proclaimed Emperor of Haiti, under the title of Faustin I. Why he chose the unusual name of Faustin, history does not explain. With his royal armies he sought to invade Santo Domingo. This was exactly eighty years ago. In Bois Noir, among the mountains of La Gonave, there is an old, blind soothsayer, believed by his neighbours to be more than a hundred years old. They say that long, long ago he lived on the mainland, and that he saw the emperor Faustin ride off to war on a white horse, and that he always predicted Faustin would some day miraculously return. You can read about this Faustin I in the encyclopædias, and if you ever visit Port-au-Prince you can see his jewelled crown and sceptre in the vaults of the Banque Nationale. So much for the black Faustin I.

In 1894, in the town of Pittston, Pennsylvania, in the coal mining and farm district near Wilkes-Barre, a baby was born. The father was a German-American who had been a miner and also farmed. The mother, Anna Wirkus, was of Polish-French stock, and a Catholic. When the priest came to baptize this baby, he said to Mrs. Anna Wirkus, "What name have you chosen?" and she said, "We cannot agree; we are going to let you choose the name."

He baptized the baby "Faustin."

Wirkus tells me that up until the time he was twenty, and even after he had run away to enlist in the marine corps, Haiti meant nothing to him except a vague name in the geographies which he had studied in public school. He had not the slightest intention or desire to go to Haiti. He just happened to be sent there. He might just as likely have been sent to China or the Philippines, or to have been stationed in Philadelphia.

Only one thing remains to be added to this digression before I bring this story of Wirkus and his island back to solid earth again:

The blacks of that island, when speaking of Wirkus, sometimes refer to him as *Li té pé vini* (He who was to come).

There was no mystical nonsense about Wirkus himself. If he seemed God-sent to his superstitious blacks, born and destined at baptism to rule over them, and if his hard-boiled fellow marines considered it somewhat strange that a "regular guy" like Wirkus should be content to remain for years at such a lonely post, I am sure that he never thought of himself as being in any way out of the ordinary. Yet he was out of the ordinary, in more ways than one. I learned this before I ever met him. It so happened that I had been in Haiti several months before I heard of Wirkus. Then one of the treaty officials told me about him, suggesting that since I was studying primitive peasant life, his island would be a good place for me to visit. He was sure I'd be welcome, but when he saw how interested I was, he took the trouble to have a message sent over. Wirkus sent back word that I could come any time I pleased, stay a week or a month as it suited me.

On the night before starting I sat in De Reix's bar with Major Davis, Q.M.C., and Captain Pressley of the flying corps, discussing the trip, over a bottle of Haitian rum. They knew Wirkus—had fished with him for barracuda. I was asking what I might take along that would please him.

"Well," said Major Davis ponderously, "you might take him a big box of sweets . . . he likes chocolates and bon-bons best."

"Is that your poor idea of a joke?" I said. "I thought you told me Wirkus was a hard-boiled sergeant of marines."

"No," said the major, quietly, "I'm not razzing you. He's hard-boiled all right. Look at his jaw. He can outcurse and outfight any tough baby I know in the whole service. But he doesn't drink . . . come to think of it, I don't believe he smokes either . . . and he eats quite a lot of sweetstuff. They tell me alcohol turns to sugar, and I suppose when a fellow doesn't drink he needs more sweets. I might just as well have told you to take him jam. We always take him something of that sort, but I happen to know he's got a whole shelf of it—"

"Don't get off on the wrong foot with Wirkus," Captain Pressley cut in—"this stuff about his not drinking and smoking. He's no Sunday school product by a damned sight. He just happens not to care anything about liquor, and where he is it's



a good thing he's that way . . . out there on an island full of rum and nigger wenches and lazy coconut groves, he's stayed as hard as nails. He's built himself a rifle range where he practises all by himself . . . rides, hunts, fishes when he's not working. He shaves every morning . . . he's fixed himself a shower better than we've got at the club. A rum-hound or a lazy guy would go crazy out there, but it suits him, and it seems to suit the natives. He's helped them in a lot of ways they were never helped before, and they think he's God Almighty. You've heard, I guess, that they crowned him king or something. That's a hot one."

Next morning it was this same Captain Pressley who flew me out high across the bay toward the smoky-blue mountains of La Gonave, which turned vivid green as we approached. We soared down to land on a saline flat near the shore. As we taxied across it four or five cows loped out from the mangrove tangle, with negroes screaming, running, trying to head them, and Pressley had to swerve sharply, dangerously, to avoid a smash.

As we came safely to a stop and were climbing out, pushing up our goggles and loosening our helmets, disengaging ourselves from the parachutes strapped on our backs, Wirkus came striding across the saline toward us. It was seven-thirty in the morning, and he was bareheaded. This was the first time I had ever seen him. He was wearing grease-smeared khaki overalls, his hands were black with oil and grease, and there were streaks of it on his bare sunburnt arms. But his hair was so straw-blond, his eyes so clear grey-blue, his smooth-shaven face so healthy-ruddy-bronzed, that he looked clean. You could almost smell bath-soap as you looked at him. He was a shade under six feet tall and built like a light heavy-weight in training. His jaw was as square as a piece of granite, and he was scowling. He didn't look at us as we came up. He was looking at the wing of the 'plane, which had tilted and dragged as we swerved, to see if it had been injured. Then he came and shook hands. Pressley had shut off the roaring engine.

Some thirty feet away from us stood four negro gendarmes in uniform, with a handsome mulatto sergeant. They were whispering together and seemed to be pained about something. As Wirkus strode over toward them they snapped smartly to salute, then hung their heads sheepishly.

"Listen," said Pressley, "this is going to be good. They have had strict orders to allow no cows within a mile of this landing field. We've had trouble before."

Wirkus addressed himself slowly, grimly, in level tones, to the sergeant alone:

"*Ou même responsab' zaffai' là*" (You are to blame for that business).

"*Oui, mon lieutenant,*" moaned the sergeant, like a child found at fault, not daring to deny it, and Wirkus, who spoke creole with an appalling colloquial fluency, continued in his same level tones:

"*Ou fait goddam macacq, ou vi goddam macacq, ou mourri goddam macacq; ou p'r aller joind' rade macacq cinq jou'*" (literally: You made [were born] goddamned monkey, you live goddamned monkey, you will die goddamned monkey; so go join monkey-clothes [prisoner-stripes] five days).

"*Oui, mon lieutenant,*" moaned the sergeant, and marched sadly away to put himself under arrest, and take off his handsome uniform, and haul rock for five days barefooted in black-and-white striped monkey-clothes.

As he walked away, Wirkus called after him, still in creole:

"I'm not going to break you, Albert; tell Corporal Dejoie to take over your work for the five days."

"*Merci, empile, lieutenant.*" And that was that. Wirkus felt better. He had tempered justice with mercy. He grinned. Some prisoners appeared, piled my gear on their heads, and disappeared in single file up a trail through the mangroves. Wirkus asked Pressley to stay over and fish. He had been tinkering on his old one-cylinder motor-boat and had it hitting. But Pressley had to go back.

Wirkus led me up the path through the mangroves to a straw-roofed village overlooking the sea and affording a fine view of the towering mountains of the Haitian mainland over yonder. It was Anse-à-Galets, the capital of his island kingdom. The only buildings not made of mud and straw were his own house, which was a stone-concrete bungalow with a big screened porch, and the gendarmerie headquarters, over which the Haitian flag flew. It looked like a Kiplingesque outpost on the edge of the jungle, which was what it was.

He was comfortably installed. He had some furniture from the States, a plain Grand Rapids dining-room table and two iron cots in separate rooms, Haitian withe-bottom straight chairs and rockers, a cupboard and shelves piled with tinned goods, a rack of earthen water-jugs, a wardrobe closet in his bedroom with books piled on top of it, a washstand with enamel bowl and pitcher, clean white bath towels. On wall-racks in the main room

were a shotgun, saddle bags, tarpon rods, and tackle. A petrol pressure-lamp hung from the ceiling. In the bedrooms there were candles. The floor was clean-swept concrete. It seemed a pleasant place. He had a servant, a boy named Mauvais, who kept things in order, and cooked in a detached kitchen. The shower was in the back yard, a big barrel mounted on poles, surrounded by a screen of woven branches. A ladder went up to the barrel.

From the beginning, Wirkus was hospitable. The feel of him was friendly. But he was self-contained. He didn't waste words. He was evidently not the sort of man who talked a great deal or gave confidences on first acquaintance. He was waiting, I suppose, to get the feel of what sort of animal I might essentially be inside.

He opened slowly. I think he was somewhat relieved that I was not a highbrow. When he found that I could speak creole, that I had been a good deal in the mountains of the mainland, that I liked to fish and wear old clothes, I could feel that he was beginning to feel it would probably be all right. These things sound like nothing at all, but when two men who have never seen each other are going to live together intimately marooned for weeks, such things take on an importance.

I didn't mention the king business. He could tell me about that, if he would, in his own good time. We fished the first afternoon and killed six barracuda. I had never fished for barracuda, but it was the same thing more or less as fishing for tarpon, the tackle was the same; but once gassed and in the boat, you had to look out for their wolfish teeth, which could take off a hand at the wrist and had been known to do it. Wirkus and I began slowly to get better acquainted. I asked him about the boat, which was old, but twenty feet long and seaworthy. I asked him if he ever went to Port-au-Prince in it, and what sort of boats the natives of the island had. I had got the impression that his only connecting link with the mainland was by 'plane. That was a matter of convenience, he said. It was forty-two miles from Anse-à-Galets to Port-au-Prince. The 'planes made it in less than half-an-hour. It took him between eight and nine hours to do it in his boat; so he made the boat trip only once or twice a year to have it overhauled. The natives had lots of boats, crude sailing boats, in which they fished and occasionally went over to the mainland, but when the winds were wrong it sometimes meant three or four days for the round trip. The gendarmerie had given him his motor boat so that he could make monthly inspections,

circumnavigating his island, of his six tiny gendarme stations in its principal coast villages. He would take me along on one of the trips, he said, if I cared to go, but this coming Saturday he thought I might see more, and enjoy it more, if we took a horseback ride up into the hills.

The rapid change in landscape was astonishing. Anse was sun-baked, yellow with its mud walls and straw roofs, rather barren. But not five hundred yards behind the village our trail led beside a stream, into a little green narrow valley that was a paradise, tropical trees, ferns, and flowers, bright-coloured birds flitting. Where the stream widened to a shallow basin we came upon a group of girls and women, some naked, some in loin cloths, the streaked sunlight playing through the palm branches on their black, smooth, shiny skins. They were washing clothes, beating them with wooden paddles, singing, and cried out friendly greeting as we passed.

Donkey trains with big panniers occasionally passed us. The women with them, some riding, some afoot, wore cotton dresses; the men and boys, faded-blue jeans. All, both men and women, saluted Wirkus respectfully, yet familiarly, as if he were a sort of intimately known superior being. He called many by name, and of some who had come far he inquired about their families, about their crops. A number of times I heard him use the phrase, "*Dis moon bon jou' p'r moin*" (Tell your people good day for me).

A little higher up in the valley we came to the ruins of a primitive water-mill which had been destroyed by a freshet. In the clearing just up the hillside stood a new building, with cows grazing, poinsettias flaming at the fence gate, other signs of prosperity. An old woman in white, with a white bandanna, barefoot, gold hoop earrings, and a red coral necklace, who had been sitting in the doorway, spied us. She leaped up. She must have been past seventy, but she was agile as a goat. She called out to us, came hurrying down to the path, seized Wirkus's hand, covered it with kisses, tried to drag him from his horse, and failing in this, began tugging at the reins.

Wirkus was embarrassed, particularly about the hand-kissing. "I guess we'll have to stop for five minutes," he said. So we dismounted and followed the old woman to the house. It was another home-made mill, primitive as the one below, except that it was driven by a shiny little petrol engine of American make. The old woman gave us coffee and lamented that Jules Narcisse, apparently her son, had missed our visit. When we left, she tried to kiss Wirkus's hand again.

"Are they all like that toward you?" I asked him.

"No, no," said Wirkus, annoyed. "I gave her son a little help once, and she can't seem to forget it. She's getting old."

It was from the son, Jules Narcisse, on a subsequent occasion and Wirkus not present, that I learned the story of the two mills.

Three times, in three successive rainy seasons, torrents had wrecked the mill below, and he was prepared to give up when Wirkus advised him to borrow money, bring an engine over from the mainland, and put his mill up on the hillside. Narcisse had a brother who believed himself to be a mason and who professed complete ability to "set" the engine. But he built the concrete base out of true, and the belt kept flying off. So they went in despair to Wirkus, wailing that the American engine was no good.

And Wirkus went up to take a look. "It was *terrificant*, monsieur," Narcisse told me, "it was *terrificant* what the lieutenant said and did. My brother and I fled from his curses and observed him from the door. He seized a crowbar and we thought he would destroy the engine, but he smashed only its base, and then he went away, telling us nothing, heaping on our heads awful curses. But, monsieur, he returned! On that selfsame day he returned. And he had taken off his uniform as when he works upon his boat. Behind him came men bearing new bags of cement on their heads. And in his hand there were tools, a trowel. And, monsieur, with his own hands he set the engine true, as you behold it now."

These details I learned later, but on the trail that morning I suspected that something of the sort was behind the old woman's gratitude, for other illuminating episodes occurred.

After climbing slowly upward, partly through rising jungles and partly along rocky mountain slopes, to an altitude of nearly three thousand feet, we crossed over a range and found ourselves on a wide fertile central plateau, called the Plaine Mapou, with a higher range rising beyond it. It was covered with "gardens" (small farms) and habitations. Across this plain, then turning northward, following its length, we galloped. At some of the little farms on the Plaine Mapou we stopped, or rather were stopped. One man insisted on showing Wirkus some baby pigs. I got that tale also later. Wirkus had found scrawny runt razorbacks on the island. He had persuaded the American agricultural station at Jacmel to give him a blooded boar and brood-sow. He had presented them as a gift to a certain dependable *gros nègre* in the mountains, with the understanding that the *gros nègre* must in turn

give away all the first litter; after that the pair and its further progeny belonged to the owner. Each person who got one of the litter must in turn cross it with the razorbacks, and give away all of that first brood. So by now, without expense or exchange of money, this new blood was scattering all over the island and everybody benefiting. At another place we stopped, it was the same story over again, this time about melons. Three-fourths of the seeds of the first crop had to be given away. You could give them to your brother or cousins if you wanted to, but you had to give them away. There is much to be said for despotism as a form of government. Wirkus was tyrannical. I began to understand why these peasants looked up to him as a sort of God Almighty.

It was in the Plaine Mapou that we turned aside to see a certain *gros nègre*, a rich, swaggering peasant named Alliance Laurent, who, Wirkus had learned, was infringing on the land of neighbours. With many wives and concubines, he strutted like a proud rooster surrounded by his hens.

Wirkus smiled like a benevolent crocodile on Laurent, took his outstretched hand, fired a string of compliments among his women, and began congratulating Laurent on his handsome breeches and boots.

"You know, Laurent," he said, "why it gives me such pleasure to see you in fine health and fine garment?"

Laurent gasped.

"Because it will add to the joy of the girls and women at Anse-à-Galets when they see you marching barefooted in monkey-clothes (stripes), carrying water all day long on your head for my shower bath."

Not a word had been spoken about the infringement of land-rights, but we weren't a mile along the trail when a terrified and humble Laurent came galloping after us, promising to restore all he had taken.

We saw a woman Wirkus had sent over to the mainland for a double cataract operation. She hadn't wanted to go. She had been afraid. He made her go. He made a boatman down at Pointe-à-Racquette take her. She had come back seeing. She thought he was God Almighty.

And so it went. As we galloped back down to Anse, it was getting plainer and plainer why they feared and admired him. But I was beginning to wonder about the king business. Eventually curiosity got the better of me and I asked him about it, what

there was to it, whether it was true. He seemed embarrassed again. He said, well, yes, there was something to it; one of these days he'd tell me all about it, and since I seemed to be interested in the island we'd make another trip up soon, up to the top of Bois Noir, and see the black queen.

This was the first I'd heard of a black queen. I don't think Wirkus realized how startling it sounded.

## II

THE night before our projected journey up to Bois Noir to visit the black queen, Ti Meminne, Wirkus told me the story of how he had been crowned king of La Gonave.

Coming to the island four years before, he had set about a thorough exploration of its interior. From peasants who came down to the coast, he had heard that in Bois Noir, in a forest on a mountain top, in the almost exact geographical centre of the island, there dwelt an old black woman who had ruled for more than thirty years. In her compound, they said, was a drum "taller than a man," so that the drummers had to stand on a raised platform to boom out the signals for the convocations of her court. She had prime ministers, they told him, a cabinet, and an army.

He hadn't quite believed it, he said, but he had gone up, alone, unarmed, and friendly I gathered, to see what it was all about. The old woman had proudly welcomed him and set the drum booming. In an hour or two, processions of negroes, men and women, blowing conch-shells, beating work-drums, waving flags, armed with machetes, began arriving, until there were several hundred in her compound. She introduced him to an old man who was *ministre l'intérieur*, others who were *ministre l'agriculture*, *ministre la guerre*, etc. Wirkus remained there. He spent almost the entire first day in conference with them. They talked and talked and talked. Also they sent for the old blind soothsayer.

What they really had, he discovered, was a sort of agricultural guild, primitive yet highly organized. In planting-times and harvest, in times for clearing new ground, they went about in little armies, fifty or a hundred to a group, and did the work communistically. They had been organized that way "forever" back in the mountains, one of the old men told him. And the queen with her council and court preserved order among them, settled

disputes, dispensed justice. It seemed to me as he told it that he was describing a sort of primitive monarchical communism. The present queen, Ti Meminne, had ruled for a generation. Before her there had been a queen called La Reine Tirhazard, who had reigned from time immemorial. The more Wirkus listened to this, he told me, the more he liked it. It "sounded good to him," he said. "Why bust it up? Let it ride awhile and see how it worked out." So he made a speech to the assembly. He told them he had been sent over "with authority" from the mainland, and confirmed the queen Ti Meminne in power. As for his part, he would stay on the island to supervise everything and help them. When Ti Meminne needed advice, he told her, let her send a messenger down to Anse-à-Galets, and he would ride up for conference. He didn't know how it was going to work out, but he thought he'd give it a trial.

Well, a week later they had sent for him, and when he arrived they waved flags over his head—it seems the old soothsayer had been meanwhile consulted—strewed flowers and palm branches in his path, put a big yellow silk bandanna over his shoulders, set him in a chair, and carried him round and round in a circle, singing, and knelt before him, and laid machetes upon his shoulder, "a lot of stuff like that," he said, and crowned him king of La Gonave.

He had seen a certain humorous element in it naturally—he grinned as he told me the details—but they took it, he said, "damned seriously."

Just how seriously they took it he hadn't realized until some weeks later, when he had started building a stone wharf at Anse; it was in January, and he had estimated that with a dozen men working steadily he ought to get it finished by May. One morning, he said, he was awakened by an ungodly noise, and into Anse poured the queen Ti Meminne's army, down from the mountains, five hundred of them, beating their drums, blowing their conchshells, howling, followed by their women, donkeys laden with great panniers of food and iron cooking-pots. Flags were planted in the clearing before the house, the old *ministre la guerre* shouted commands, and there they pitched camp. "There were even dogs and chickens," he said, "and pigs." Wirkus stood watching this from his front door, he told me, thinking "What the hell?" He went back to the house, he said, and put on his belt with his forty-five automatic. He said he also put on his lieutenant's helmet. He had seen his six gendarmes out there, standing off at a distance,



gaping like sheep. It was the first, last, and only time he had ever packed a gun, he said, in his whole four years at La Gonave. Wirkus talked well when once he got started. He said he was so surprised at this eruption that the thought of his stone wharf never entered his head. The *ministre la guerre*, escorted by flags, came over to see him and explained. In exactly four days, Wirkus told me, "they had the stone wharf built, completed, finished." They wouldn't take pay from him, they wouldn't take gifts, they wouldn't even take food or permit help from his village. They were high-handed. And when they had finished they broke camp, came and marched three times round his house, waving their flags and singing a song about him, and went back to the mountain. "Hot damn," said Wirkus, grinning. He grinned in memory over it, and what a fool he'd been to put on his belt, and of how they'd got his stone wharf finished in four days.

He guessed that was about the whole story of how they'd made him a king, except—"well, you know these Haitians, the ones back in the bush . . . they're superstitious, superstitious about everything," and some of the old ones had the notion that he'd been "sent." Well, that was all right, he had been sent, said he—by orders of the U.S. marine corps.

We got talking about the peasants. "They're a funny lot," he said. "You think they're simple. They're easy enough to handle. But you think you know everything that's going on in their heads, and then you find out that you don't know a damned thing about them."

We arrived at Queen Ti Meminne's habitation earlier than she had expected us. She was busily engaged in supervising the roval baking for the festivities that would be held in our honour that night. She was a huge, squat negress, past fifty, solid bulk rather than fat, with a big, heavy head, and heavy but not gross features. In physiognomy, except for her blackness and sex, she resembled a certain type of American demagogue politician. She looked capable, but not lovable. When we rode into the compound, she was seated on a low stool under a palm canopy, imperiously shouting orders in a hoarse, deep voice, and munching a stalk of sugar cane.

She was clothed in a checkered Mother Hubbard and a blue bandanna. She wore bracelets and earrings. She was barefooted. She heaved herself up and waddled to greet us as we dismounted. She was very respectful and friendly to Wirkus. But there was no ceremony about it, either on his part or hers. The ceremonies,

titles, formalities, and obeisances, I gathered, were confined entirely to the formal convocations and assemblies. She shouted commands about the care of our horses, water and food for them and us. There must have been a dozen people there to serve her, servants and relatives, I judged, ranging in age from naked brats to crones. She was a widow and boss of her own household as well as a queen. After seeing that we were comfortable and food spread before us, she returned to her stool under the canopy and resumed direction of the baking.

There was something Alice-in-Wonderland about her bulk and her baking, her scowling, imperious face; with gingerbread cookies and casava cakes, more than a bushel of them already piled on a blanket before her, and others coming on trays from the oven. There was something decidedly Alice-in-Wonderland about the stalk of sugar cane she was chewing; it was golden in the sunlight and you could half shut your eyes and imagine that the queen was angrily munching her sceptre.

Through an open door we could see big flaps of dough being cut up by three girls. On another table, dough was being kneaded, and on another white flour was spread.

Outside, under a smaller *tunnelle*, the casava cakes were being baked by an old man and two boys. A five-foot circular sheet of heavy iron was raised slightly from the ground with hot embers beneath it—a gigantic pancake gridiron. The gingerbread was being carried on trays to an oven cut out of a limestone hillside. The old woman who tended it, pushing the trays far in with a long pole, had built a shelter of banana leaves as a protection against the sun.

Wirkus took me to see the big drum which stood upright beneath a tree. It was a monster, as tom-toms go, but nothing of that sort is ever quite as big as you expect it to be—not even a whale or the Woolworth Tower or the *Olympic*. This drum, a cylinder hollowed from a tree-trunk, with a head of bull's hide, was just a few inches taller than a man. I was disappointed. I had thought it was going to be at least ten feet high. It was beaten, Wirkus told me, with the two fists, and the man had to stand on a platform when he beat it. This somewhat assuaged my disappointment. After all, it was a monster.

I hadn't felt drawn toward Queen Ti Meminne. I didn't find her sympathetic. When Wirkus asked her to let me photograph her while there was still plenty of sunlight, I became slightly annoyed with her. She insisted on dressing first, and I wanted her

the way she was. She went into one of the houses, yelled for maidservants, and presently emerged with a white muslin "store" dress, stockings, and black patent leather shoes. She had taken off her bandanna and smeared her black cheeks with powder. It took Wirkus five minutes, at my request, to persuade her to wind another turban round her head. When we posed her in a chair, on a mat, with Wirkus in another chair by her side, she yelled to one of the girls to run into the house for the wooden baton which was her sceptre. I was beginning to respect her, if I didn't like her. She was a person, and a strong-charactered person. As I was about to press the camera shutter, she felt something still lacking to her dignity and emitted another hoarse yell, this time for the *drapeau*. A young girl came, bubbling with interest but a little afraid of the camera, and knelt with the flag before her. Ti Meminne, who had had some previous experience of being photographed since the advent of Wirkus, considered the matter, and noticed that the girl and the flag would obscure the glory of her patent leather shoes. With a well-directed kick in the *bunda*, she toppled the girl over and ordered her to kneel at the left. Then she patted her on the head to show that she wasn't angry, and finally I got the picture. I decided that queens are what they are. They are not like presidents. They don't have to put on cowboy hats and shake hands and smile sourly and say they owed it all to their mothers. I mentally apologized to her for not liking her. I didn't say anything to Wirkus about it all. I was wrong anyway. If she had proved to be something like a black tribal queen in an African tom-tom movie, I suppose I should have been enchanted with the theatricality. When, instead of that, she had turned out to be a real and somewhat surly strongheaded person, it had annoyed me. Wirkus and I went down the mountainside to see if we could shoot a few wild pigeons for her.

The events of the evening were sufficiently dramatic. I forgot all about Ti Meminne's patent leather shoes and the powder on her cheeks when that monster drum began to boom. Toward dusk, up from the narrow, winding footpaths came processions of negroes, headed by women bearing flags, singing "*Drapeau! Drapeau! Drapeau!*" and men blowing conch-shells. As some of the processions arrived and became quiet, we could hear others approaching a half-mile distant down the mountain side. The flag-bearers, always women and usually the handsomest wenches, were tall, up-standing, barefooted, their bodies covered only by thin, faded cotton shifts, which moulded to their high breasts and powerful buttocks as

they moved; they wore barbarically brilliant red, yellow, and sapphire bandanna headcloths, gold earrings, and necklaces of coral and glass beads. All the flags, as the different groups arrived, were stuck horizontally in the thatch roofing of the big peristyle under which the convocation was to take place. The royal orchestra consisted of three drums, a wooden box on which a man rat-a-tatted lustily with two sticks, and a rattle (*cha-cha*) made with pebbles in a canister.

King Wirkus and Queen Ti Meminne sat on a raised platform behind the drums. On his head was a high crown of yellow feathers with little pieces of mirror sewn in, as they are frequently sewn on Hindu tapestries, glittering in the torchlight like rhinestones or diamonds. Wirkus would never let me photograph him with this crown on his head. He felt that if it were published it might make him seem ridiculous at home. As a matter of fact, it was not ridiculous in that setting, as he sat there, blond, square-jawed, soberly competent. It wasn't a joke he was lending himself to. These natives took themselves and him seriously.

With some of the groups that arrived were the presidents and *ministres* of various allied Congo societies, the Belle Etoile, Fleur de Jeunesse, Reservée La Famille, Sainte Trinité. The presidents were old men chiefly. There were also minor queens. Each society had one. Their names were shouted out as they arrived, and some of them were nice names; I remember a venerable old man called Augustin Tranquil, and a woman who was La Reine Masélie. As these special personages arrived, they were escorted into the peristyle with their groups, flag girls holding the flags of their societies crossed over their heads. These flags were of various colours and materials; the flag of the Société Belle Etoile was of blue silk with white rosettes sewn on it and streamers of orange; the flag of another society was red with three inverted V's in black.

As a queen or president was marched into the peristyle, the drums would beat out the special rhythm of that society as they marched circling three times round, then stopped before the drums. If the personage was a man, he stood to salute, swinging off his hat and holding it straight out at arm's length before him; if a woman, she dropped to one knee, in a sort of kneeling curtsy.

When various of these had arrived and made obeisance, Queen Ti Meminne's own master of ceremonies, armed with a long baton, took charge, assembling before the drums the flag women and officials of Ti Meminne's own court. This is what he shouted, as they assembled:

"*Attention!*"

"*Le Roi! Le Roi! Le Roi!*"

(*Helloi! Helloi! Helloi!*" was shouted by the crowd, with a short rat-a-tat salvo on the drums.)

"*Attention!*"

"*La Reine! La Reine! La Reine!*"

"*Helloi! Helloi! Helloi!*" (Another drum salvo.)

"*Général La Place!*"

"*Adjudant La Place!*"

"*Président en chef!*"

"*Ministre la guerre!*"

"*Ministre l'intérieur!*"

"*Ministre agriculture!*"

"*Helloi! Helloi! Helloi!*" (Salvo.)

"*La Reine chanteuse!*"

"*La Reine Victoria!*"

"*La Reine Drapeau!*"

"*Confiance La Reine!*"

"*Helloi! Helloi! Helloi!*" (Final salvo)

A pale yellow silk bandanna scarf was handed to Queen Ti Meminne, who knotted it round King Wirkus's shoulders. Four big negroes mounted the throne, and lifting up the chair in which King Wirkus was seated, marched with him three times round the peristyle, as the Pope is carried in St. Peter's, and then round in circles through the crowd outside it, the people falling in behind, shouting, waving flags, blowing conch-shells. And this ended the formal ceremony.

A *danse Congo* and feasting followed, which lasted through the night.

There is a point scarcely necessary to state, but which I promised Wirkus I would set down in so many plain words so that nobody could misunderstand. Wirkus, though king of the island, is not married to the queen; he is not married to anybody.

# ROMANCE AND ADVENTURE OF EAST INDIA COMPANY

By  
A. J. RUSSELL

QUEEN ELIZABETH changed her mind again. Her messenger sped to Plymouth with the command that her favourite, Sir Francis Drake, must not put to sea again to harry her old enemy Spain.

Wisely Sir Francis may have been suspicious. When the royal messenger arrived he was already heading for the Spanish main. Had he been less speedy there might never have been a golden age for British merchant adventurers in the East Indies.

Again he slipped into Cadiz and smashed up the ships that were to be used against England. He voyaged on until he encountered a tall vessel, the *St. Philip*, owned by the King of Spain and bearing his name, which he captured and brought home to Plymouth. In modern currency her cargo was worth a million pounds; but her papers were a more valuable prize, for they disclosed to a nation, still lagging behind the rest of Europe, the secrets of the East India trade.

After that lucky discovery the formation of the East India company was inevitable. It became the most powerful trading concern that this world has ever seen, controlling until the Indian mutiny, three hundred and fifty years later, a great oriental empire. Beginning as a private venture by a few enterprising merchants, its power grew and grew; it appointed its own governors, owned and directed an army, cavalry, artillery, a navy, and a fleet of merchantmen that could challenge the warships of other countries.

On their trading vessels the East India company unstintingly lavished their wealth, and so for beauty, strength and equipment nothing afloat could rival the old East Indiamen. Their commanders, like the Vikings of old, were tremendous fellows. Resolute, fearless, they were at once soldiers and sailors, surveyors and explorers, traders and buccaneers.

Though these pioneers never neglected an opportunity to do honest trading, often at one hundred per cent profit, for this was the reason of their existence, they were invariably ready to attack

and pillage ships of other countries returning laden with golder merchandise. They liked trading; they loved fighting. Their firs admiral, a tough sea dog named Lancaster, made it a practice to haunt the narrow straits of Malacca, knowing that if he waitec long enough he was certain of some rich prizes.

His flagship was the *Red Dragon*, and it was well named. Once called *Scourge of the Seas*, it had been used by a freebooting peer, the Earl of Cumberland, for roving and preying on lone ships at sea.

Such a vessel was needed for the East Indies adventure—which aroused the greatest resentment abroad. The Spanish and Portuguese claimed that they had had the monopoly of trading in Indian waters for the past hundred years. Spain even complained to Elizabeth that Drake, by sailing round the world, had infringed her rights, since the Pope Alexander VI had divided all unknown parts between the Spanish and the Portuguese. Elizabeth pertly replied that the English had the same rights as the Spanish since sea and air were common to all. But the entry of England into Indian waters meant bloody encounters between her ships and those of the Roman Catholic countries. There was also serious trouble with Holland, but this Protestant country had one thing in common with England, a strong antagonism to Catholic ships, especially the Portuguese who were thriving in the Indian ocean.

Yet England was slow to enter upon this period brimful of adventurous travel and romantic pursuit of wealth. It was the profiteering cupidity of her rivals which supplied the final incentive. Whilst the Portuguese jealously guarded the secrets of their trade routes, they were quite ready to sell at a high price in the English markets the richest spoils of the East. And the Dutch too. In 1598 the Dutch were so busy in southern Asiatic waters that they even sent to England for ships to supplement their own. That made British merchants turn green with envy. The high charges made for pepper, now 8s. a pound, had completely upset British patience. At last, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, ships of the newly formed East India company burst into the sacrosanct Indian ocean. Then began that long sea and land battle for the trade and later for the domination of the orient.

The fleet of four British ships first sent out by the East India company all returned laden with merchandise, also with spoils seized from rival traders. Remembering the profiteering in pepper that had been proceeding before he left, Admiral Lancaster laid in a good cargo of this commodity, for it was in great demand at home

as a preservative. Over a million pounds weight of pepper sold at 8s. or more a pound, he calculated, would bring into the company almost half a million pounds, enough to pay all expenses including the total cost of the ships. But if his luck had been in when he robbed the Portuguese traders in the Bay of Bengal it was out when he reached London. For one of its periodical plagues had stricken the city and driven all the buyers away. Still worse luck, the Dutch had returned first and unloaded so much pepper that the market price had slumped to 1s. 2d. per pound. Instead of receiving their dividends in gold the shareholders had to take them in—pepper! Yet conditions improved, prices rose again, and profits on the first two voyages came to nearly one hundred per cent!

It should be understood that the term East Indies included not only India but all the countries on the east side of the Bay of Bengal, the Straits of Malacca, the Spice Islands, Siam, Java, and even China and Japan. Armed with a valuable monopoly to trade in these areas, the East India company performed some remarkable exploits. Yet they were feebly supported by the vacillating and unpopular governments of James I and Charles I. Cromwell annulled their charter, but it was renewed three years later. The company, having suffered severe losses, issued new stock, and their fortunes improved.

Though there was formal peace at home between Portugal and England, there was always bitter war in the East, for the company's ships were being continually molested. So the East Indiamen were sent to the Persian Gulf, where they helped the Persian king to eject the Portuguese from the island of Hormuz where they had been for a century. Yet no remonstrance was made officially by Portugal.

By now the Dutch had become more formidable enemies than the Portuguese and a ferocious war was waging, uncontrolled by any laws and without quarter being given. A treaty for twenty years, made just in time to prevent a bloody encounter between eleven of our best ships and seventeen of the Dutch, lasted for as many months, ending in an atrocious outrage, the torture and then the general massacre of all the English at Amboyna.

Never before in the world's history had there been so much bloodshed over commerce alone! As the Dutch were so preponderant in the Spice Islands, the East Indiamen now began to concentrate on the western side of India where Bombay, which means good harbour, was acquired from the Portuguese as a dowry to Catherine, wife of Charles II.



And here the Great Mogul of India comes into the picture. He was a descendant of the Emperor Baber, who invaded India from central Asia in the sixteenth century, and thus recorded his notable achievement: "When I subdued . . . the empire of Hindustan all that were in camp with me were numbered and they amounted to twelve thousand men. I placed my foot in the stirrup of resolution, and my hands on the reins of confidence in God, and I marched against the possessions of the throne of Delhi and the dominion of Hindustan, whose army was said to amount to one hundred thousand foot, with more than one thousand elephants. The most high God did not suffer the hardships that I had undergone to be thrown away, but defeated my formidable enemy and made me conqueror of this noble country."

It can be seen from this that before the coming of the British, the idea that India could be conquered by a small force was not new. Yet territorial acquisition either by purchase or conquest, was not in the original plan of the adventurers of the East India company. Throughout the seventeenth century they strove to confine themselves strictly to commerce. On the other hand the Dutch concentrated first on territorial acquisition. The British found that the Dutch policy was successful for they, from their fortified settlements, could carry on fair trade with the mogul's underlings whilst the British, dealing from the ships, had constantly the worst of the bargaining.

Consequently a notable "adventurer," Sir Thomas Roe, was sent by the company as special ambassador to the court of the great mogul to effect a permanent treaty and to acquire pieces of territory as bases for trade. His experiences make entertaining reading. His reception at the mogul's court was at first most unflattering. Traders, assuming the rôle of British ambassadors, who had previously approached the great mogul on behalf of the East India company, were too sensible of the might and dignity of this oriental potentate, and too obsequious to him. They had been received with scorn, laughed at, and kicked from the imperial presence. This treatment was the outcome of the intrigues of the Portuguese. What had surprised the great mogul was that the English were content to depart without demanding satisfaction for their humiliating treatment.

When Roe arrived, making high claims to respect, the officials turned to one another and again laughed at the English intruder. The Governor of Surat, regardless of warnings, felt himself safe in flouting the newcomer and appropriating his goods. He threw

many obstacles in the way of Roe's approach to the great mogul. But the Englishman coolly stood his ground and refused to be humiliated. Matching his clear brain and suave tongue against oriental cunning, he achieved an ascendancy over the governor, who sought his friendship and gave him safe conduct to the emperor.

Known as the World Encirler, the great mogul exercised absolute dominion over his people. All his subjects were slaves. But he too was a slave, a slave of one woman, his favourite among one thousand wives.

When Roe was at the palace one of these thousand wives was discovered embracing a eunuch. She was half-buried and left alone for three days, her bare head and shoulders exposed to the fierce tropical sun.

Roe was a witness of another act of despotic cruelty by the World Encirler. Since no man could drink wine without permission of the emperor, it was the custom of the court to record in a book the names of those who drank. One day the great mogul ordered his courtiers to take wine, but himself drank so generously that he forgot the order. When he asked who had told them to drink there was none present brave enough to name his host. Enraged at the breaking of his rule, he fined some heavily and ordered those who were nearest to him to be given one hundred and thirty stripes with a whip having four great spurs at the end. With every blow this terrible instrument made four wounds in the flesh. Afterwards the attendants were ordered to kick the wounded courtiers as they lay bleeding. Roe observed that one of the victims of the great mogul's forgotten hospitality was taken out dead.

The British ambassador was undaunted by the emperor's ferocity. A resolute character, he was prepared to yield only in small matters, and was as grim as steel, regardless of cost in the major affairs of his company. When the presents that he was to give to the mogul arrived, the emperor opened them before Roe put in an appearance, and appropriated not only his own but those meant for his son, as well as some of the ambassador's own private possessions. Roe stoutly protested to the mogul, who told his visitor not to be annoyed at his impatience. Roe subsided, concluding that this robbery was a good omen.

The wealth of the great mogul was fabulous. He bought all the jewellery that was brought to his palace. Seen by Roe, descending the stairs to the deafening shouts "Health to the king!" the mogul was wearing a sword and buckler encrusted with great diamonds and rubies. To one side of his head hung an uncut ruby

as big as a walnut, on the other a diamond of similar size, and in the centre an emerald to match. His body was smothered in great chains of pearls, rubies and diamonds. About his neck were three double strings of pearls, "the largest I ever saw," said Roe. There were amulets set with diamonds above his elbows, three rows of various stones on his wrists, and a jewelled ring on almost every finger. His ankles were encased in buskins set with pearls. As against all this pomp and glitter of the greedy mogul, the peasantry were living in such poverty that the only houses they could afford were mud huts.

After Roe had been commanded to take wine, the emperor presented him with the large golden bowl from which he drank. During his stay Roe also secured special privileges for his company which set up a factory at Surat.

Another English visitor to the court, Hawkins, was well entertained at first. The great mogul, knowing that he was himself a golden cuckoo in the Indian nest, liked to surround himself with stronger personalities than his Indian subjects, and he offered Hawkins a salary worth thirty thousand pounds a year to remain as a permanent official. But Portuguese intrigues soon made the post untenable, and Hawkins departed.

As we had no soldiers in India at that time, the only threat that Roe could bring forward to support his diplomacy was the sea power of his company. But this influenced the mogul, who had never troubled to build himself a navy, though he wore on his body enough valuables to pay for it. Hitherto the moguls had not looked for danger to the high seas. They had come into their dominion through the Khyber Pass in the north, and so long as the pass was guarded they considered themselves unconquerable.

It was the French king, Louis XIV, who first contemplated the conquest of the great mogul's dominions. He listened to the advice of Liebnitz not to attack Holland, but Egypt as the stepping stone to a great Asiatic empire. For the orientals were weak and India was the weakest part of the golden east. A French physician named Bernier, writing about that time, maintained that twenty thousand men could conquer all India, and stressed the weakness of Bengal and the riches of the whole country. Then, nearly a hundred years later, in 1746, Colonel James Mill after twenty years' service in India, suggested to the Austrian emperor a feasible and profitable scheme of conquest. He showed that the whole empire of the great mogul had always been in a state so feeble and defenceless that it was almost a miracle that no prince of Europe

with maritime power had as yet thought of making one stroke which would put him in possession of infinite wealth. He showed that the province of Bengal, still holding out against the great mogul, was indefensible from the coast.

The time had arrived for the *début* of Clive.

For years the French and the English had fought each other in India. The English lost Madras to the French but recovered it. They established trading factories in Bengal, and the nawab was jealous of their presence. When they began to defend their factories against the French they were sternly ordered to desist. Their explanation was taken as an insult, tantamount to saying that the nawab's protection was lightly regarded by foreigners. Greatly indignant, the nawab marched on Calcutta. Some English fled, the rest surrendered on the promise of honourable treatment. But the fiery nawab thrust them into the Black Hole of Calcutta from which, after a night's hideous suffering, only twenty-three out of one hundred and forty-six came out alive. The English president in Madras decreed vengeance.

Admiral Watson's fleet was despatched to Bengal with troops under the command of a young British colonel named Robert Clive, who had already displayed amazing military prowess. He quickly expelled the Indian garrisons from Calcutta and Hooghly whereupon the nawab, commanding a very large force, marched towards him. After an indecisive engagement, the nawab became frightened and called a truce during which he restored to the English their former possessions in Bengal. But the Indian ruler was secretly inviting the French to come from Hyderabad and join him against the British.

When it came to duplicity, Clive decided that two could play that game. He listened to overtures from disaffected chiefs at the nawab's court and made a compact to dethrone the ruler of Bengal in favour of Meer Jafir the nawab's commander-in-chief. Marching north he found the nawab with seventy thousand troops and forty cannon entrenched at Plassy. In the engagement that followed, the cannon were skilfully handled by Frenchmen attached to the nawab's forces, and this battery alone held its ground when the nawab and his troops began to fall back. After the French had been dislodged, the nawab's whole army was routed and the ruler himself fled.

Meer Jafir, who had been hovering on the outskirts of the fighting came in next morning and was greeted by Clive as the nawab. He hurried off to Mürshidabad, the capital, which he

occupied. The Great Mogul, though the titular emperor, had not interfered in the fighting, and so the British were now in possession of all Bengal (a province of eighty-two thousand square miles and a population today of fifty millions). From here, said the experts, a virile European force had the rest of India at its mercy.

Of that intrepid company of English adventurers in India, Clive was unquestionably the most outstanding, though he would have it known that his friend Lawrence was of at least equal merit. When Clive was offered a sword of honour as a reward for his services in India, he declined to accept it unless another was given to Lawrence without whom, he said, the British achievements would have been impossible. But Clive, like Kitchener in the Soudan, was lucky in his home government. For, standing behind the East India company, was the great Pitt, the ablest war minister that this country has ever possessed.

Clive's previous exploits showed him to be a worthy leader of a free and fierce race determined not to be ousted from their eastern settlements by any European rival, nor by the natives. When but a captain, his prestige was so great that one ruler agreed to join the English in an expedition on condition that Clive should be given supreme command.

Napoleon said of the future Duke of Wellington, that he seemed to be a *man*. Browning said that in all the world's eyes Clive *was* a man. He was indeed one of the master spirits of the British race, the greatest adventurer of the east Indies. A parson's son, he was the despair of his teachers for he neglected his books for *perilous* adventures. He was a born leader, first of boys then of *men*. Drudgery work as a clerk in Madras under an Indian sun played havoc with his youthful temperament. He was always in trouble. Once he fought a duel, twice he tried to shoot himself and each time the pistol refused to go off. A friend came in just then, and Clive remarked: "I suppose I am reserved for something great!" Yet his fits of depression did not vanish. All his life he was frequently in pain from an internal disorder.

The great Frenchman who was to be Clive's rival in India was Dupleix, commander of the French settlements before Clive left England. When Dupleix sent his forces to occupy Madras, Clive, just twenty-one, was among the Englishmen to be taken prisoners. He escaped disguised as a native to Fort David, where as a volunteer, he attracted attention in helping to repel French attacks.

The man whose eye he caught was the Major Lawrence who became his friend, and who was awarded the second sword of

honour. Clive, given a military commission, distinguished himself at Fort David as one of a storming party when he displayed a rashness amounting to folly.

The war with the French, entered upon in deadly earnest, now produced an event which was undoubtedly the turning point of the British fortunes in India. Until the defence of Arcot it looked as though the East India adventurers would succumb to the French and be ejected from the continent.

The French in Trichinopoly had caught the British and their allies in a trap. It occurred to Clive that the best way to raise the siege was to seize Arcot, which plan established his reputation as a soldier. Given his first important command, he was sent against Arcot, which he captured. His subsequent defence of that city ranks with that of Lucknow in later days. He treated the population with great consideration and made such an impression on the native soldiers that when the stock of provisions had fallen very low, the Sepoys voluntarily offered to give their rice to the Europeans, and to be content with the water in which it was boiled. Pitt's comment on Arcot was that Clive was "a heaven-sent general."

The natives had hitherto shown little respect for the English, considering that the French were the better soldiers. With the defence of Arcot in 1751, Indian opinion changed. Dupleix was swift to recognize the improvement in British prestige and he concentrated upon smashing Clive. He had already shown the English how to raise a disciplined force of native troops, and he now began to intrigue with the various princes always warring with each other. Had Dupleix been allowed a free hand and been as ably supported by Louis as Clive was by the unfettered energy of a man like Pitt, the imperial diadem of India would now be worn by France. For Dupleix, who had discovered the illusion of the mogul's greatness, held the trump cards. But the master mind of Clive in the end triumphed over the master mind of Dupleix. Recalled home in disgrace, Dupleix was left to die in poverty and neglect.

Unlike Clive, Dupleix had never served in the field, but his clever tactics often put the Englishman in a tight corner. During one night attack the French, led by a few British deserters, had gained access to the British position. Clive was sleeping in a rest house which was fired into. A box at his feet was shattered and a servant sleeping near him was killed. Clive sprang into the fighting and was wounded. Weak from loss of blood and fatigue, he stood

with his back to the wall leaning on the shoulders of his two sergeants. The officer leading the English deserters abused Clive, declaring he would shoot him. His ball, fired at close range, missed Clive and went through the two sergeants, who fell mortally wounded.

The scandalous stories which were circulated about Clive's moral character were untrue. At the conclusion of the successful operations against Dupleix, Clive married the sister of his friend Maskelyne, with whom he had escaped from Madras. It was a happy marriage. They returned to England where the court of directors paid him their tributes of admiration. It was then that he was presented with the sword of honour and first toasted as "General Clive." Yet it was only two years since this picturesque adventurer was rather grudgingly given a captain's commission on the ground that he might be of more service to the military than to the clerical side of the East India company.

His first task on returning to India was to destroy the stronghold of some Malay pirates. It was then, as governor of Fort David, with the reversion of the governorship of Madras, that he was suddenly ordered to proceed against the notorious nawab who had descended on Calcutta. That campaign resulted in the battle of Plassy and the capture of Bengal.

Luck had favoured Clive, for the nawab, who was on the way to recapture Calcutta might well have done so; he had actually reached the outskirts when Clive arrived. In a thick fog which descended with impenetrable stealth on southern Bengal, Clive found himself right inside the enemy's lines, with dark skinned native cavalry on either side of him. Apparently unconcerned, he marched boldly through and succeeded in reaching the other side of the enemy without interference. The nawab hearing that Clive had marched through his ranks, became paralysed with fear at the Englishman's daring and will to win.

The battle of Plassy followed a memorable council at which it was decided to wait awhile before engaging the enemy. For Clive had with him only four thousand troops including one thousand Europeans, against an army ten times their number. Moreover he had just marched through a swamp in torrential rains, and his men were exhausted. The decision to await a more favourable opportunity was eminently reasonable; yet Clive, meditating alone in a mango grove, felt inspired to overrule his officers and to order an immediate attack. He felt that he dared not wait longer, for the tricky Meer Jafir, with whom he was negotiating, was an unreliable

ally; and the monsoon was threatening. When he saw that the battle had started, the nawab turned to his disloyal chieftain and, throwing his head covering on the ground in front of him, exclaimed: "You are in duty bound to defend that turban!" The duty that this disloyal chieftain ultimately rendered was to send the nawab's head to the ground beside the turban. Had Clive delayed the attack the story of India might have been very different.

The two conditions of success in India were the establishment of strong positions on land and of naval supremacy at sea; and, as against the French, these conditions had been secured. But the new Nawab of Bengal now began to intrigue with the Dutch, who had their principal settlement between his capital and Calcutta. Clive, watchful of what was proceeding, prepared to spring. Rather foolishly he had entrusted the despatch to Europe of his own private fortune to the Dutch East India Company, and he knew that he was likely to lose this if he engaged in hostilities, particularly so since England and Holland were not at war.

He formed a combination of naval and military forces which surprised and captured the Dutch squadron, compelling the Hollanders to sue for peace. In this engagement he took no part other than making plans and giving the order to attack. But he chose a good man in Major Forde who, when he asked for instructions, received a note: "Dear Forde—Fight them immediately—Clive." The governor had interrupted a game of cards to write this.

When Clive returned to England in 1760 the Nawab of Bengal was now more friendly than he had ever been. He said that "I feel as if the soul were departing from my body." He had reason to be grateful to this ex-clerk, for from him he had obtained a throne.

The court of directors of the East India company and all England gave Clive an enthusiastic reception on his return home. The king received him in audience and he was welcomed by the government. Medals were struck in his honour, he became M.P. for Shrewsbury, was granted an Irish peerage and was known as Lord Clive of Plassey.

But India needed him back. Rapacity, luxury insubordination were rampant in the domain of the East India company, on the civil and military side as well. Even the Sepoys could only be kept in order by wholesale executions. It is recorded that Clive's second command was no less important for reform than his first had been for conquest. Clive's administration in Bengal was surpassed by



none for thoroughness of action, excellence of design and strength of will of the administrator. Yet before agreeing to return, Clive had to insist on the removal from office of a man named Sullivan who presided as chairman of the company. This man had been effusively friendly to Clive on his return from India but, jealous of all the honours showered upon him, had taken every opportunity to oppose him. Before leaving India finally, Clive contrived to secure from the great mogul the control of all the revenues of Bengal.

In Hindustan and upper India Clive repeated what he had achieved in Bengal. The deed whereby he secured for his company the three states Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was signed in Benares on an English dining table covered with embroidered cloth. These three important territories were surrendered, and one indignant Moslem, "in less time than would have been taken in selling a donkey."

But Clive had a way with him. He was impetuous to achieve. It was this high-handed way of his that brought trouble from disgruntled, jealous Europeans, sore because he arbitrarily stopped their predatory customs.

After Plassey, Clive was taken through the Bengal treasury and invited to name a sum of money. He took for himself £160,000 and £500,000 for his army and navy, plus £24,000 for each member of his committee. The nawab gave Clive an annual income of £27,000 a year and bequeathed him a legacy of £70,000, which Clive gave to widows and orphans. He took to England as personal estate £300,000.

Back home for good, Clive found that his many enemies were demanding a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct of affairs in India. Chafing at their unfair attacks, he made a speech in the House of Commons eloquently vindicating his administration. Chatham said that he had never heard a finer speech. During the parliamentary inquiry Clive was so rigorously examined that he burst forth with the historic exclamation: "By God, Mr. Chairman, at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation." A proposal that the House should state that Clive had abused his powers was refused, but a motion affirming that he had rendered great and meritorious services to the State was passed without a division.

Yet the strain of the inquiry and the pain of his illness had left their mark on his mind. Within a year he had carried out his original intention of over a quarter of a century ago. At the age of

fifty he committed suicide. So passed the greatest adventurer of the East India company.

Another adventurer, Warren Hastings was less fortunate in his friends at home than Clive. Impeached before the Bar of the House of Lords for high crimes and misdemeanours during his rule in India, he had to listen while the great orator Burke made an oration against him which lasted for nine days. In that generation it was thought that it must take so long to say a few things which today a junior counsel could adequately express in an hour. Yet Hastings was acquitted by the lords on every count. He expected to be given parliamentary redress, but this was refused, and he too refused the offer of a peerage. But when he appeared in the House of Commons to give evidence in connection with the renewal of the company's charter he was greeted with applause. When he withdrew all the Commons rose and stood silent and bareheaded until he had gone.

Lord Wellesley came later and established beyond the possibility of future opposition the British position throughout India in what were now the ruins of the mogul empire. That empire had totally collapsed in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was torn to fragments by usurpers within and foreign invaders without, largely because of its over-centralized government. The Indian people had become a multitude without a master ready to obey any stable government, home or foreign, that imposed itself upon them. Wellesley expelled the rebel Marathas from Delhi and took charge of the great mogul—now "a blinded, whimpering old pantaloon"—and his family for he feared that a mission from Bonaparte would attempt to rescue the emperor from his enemies. This last member of a brief dynasty of great moguls was given a British state pension with royal rank and an ample income until, in 1857, the Sepoy mutiny swept away the final relics of the mogul rulers.

During the three and a half centuries of its existence the East India company had undergone many vicissitudes and changes. It had been granted new charters and had been made to pay the government handsomely for the privileges. When the government were short of a few millions they contrived to get them from the wealthy chartered company trading with the golden east. When the nation was at war and in need of sailors they impressed them from the East Indiamen. Interlopers were allowed to get into India and share the trade, and many of them made great fortunes. Though Judge Jeffreys decided against them, the House of Commons later voted that all subjects of Britain had a right to trade

in the East unless prohibited from doing so by Act of Parliament. This led to the amalgamation of rival companies in the reign of Queen Anne when the new east India company lent the government £3,200,000.

So long as it was mainly a trading concern, the company were allowed to manage their own affairs. But Clive's brilliant victory at Plassy determined the government to have control over the company's vast territories. Under an act passed in 1773, the rank of Governor of Bengal was raised to that of Governor-General, and though the appointment was still made by the East India company, it was to be hereafter only with the approval of the crown.

Later the company ceased to be a trading concern and confined itself entirely to administration, its shareholders being assured of an annual dividend of ten per cent chargeable on the Government of India.

Then, following the mutiny, all the administrative functions of this astounding concern were taken over by the government. There being no further dynastic opposition or rivalry to British control, Disraeli seized the opportune moment to ask Queen Victoria to assume the title of Empress of India. A grand assemblage of all the chiefs and notables at Delhi, once the seat of the great mogul, gave loyal recognition to the supremacy of the British sovereign over the whole country.

Thus an adventure begun by one British queen who changed her mind, raised the title of another great British monarch from queen to empress.

# THE FIRST MEN TO FLY THE ATLANTIC

By  
F. A. BEAUMONT

**A**T 9.25 a.m. (British Summer Time) on Sunday, June 15, 1919, a biplane zoomed over the Irish coast. It had left the Newfoundland coast at 5.28 p.m. the previous day. For the first time in the history of aviation, the Atlantic had been crossed in direct, non-stop flight.

The pilot, Captain John Alcock, and the navigator, Lieutenant Arthur Whitten Brown, were both British. They flew a British aeroplane fitted with a British engine.

Through fog and sleet, with the machine now 11,000 feet up, lost in the cloud banks, now only ten feet above the raging ocean, now flying blindly through dizzy spirals or even upside down, they crossed over 1,880 miles of a grey waste of waters in fifteen hours fifty-seven minutes, at an average speed of one hundred and sixteen miles per hour.

Even when they read about it in the newspapers, millions of people refused to believe that such a miracle of flight had been accomplished. For it was only ten years after Farman had flown what seemed a terrific distance in the air—forty-seven miles—and Rougier had reached the "impossible" height of two hundred and twenty-five feet.

Moreover, the aerial conquest of the Atlantic took place under the gloomiest auspices. Only a month before, a similar attempt had failed disastrously. Some account of this, and of the problems of flying the Atlantic in those days, is essential to a full appreciation of the magnificent achievement of Alcock and Brown.

In 1913, the *Daily Mail* offered a prize of £10,000 for the first pilot to fly the Atlantic in less than seventy-two hours in a heavier-than-air machine. People said at the time that £1,000,000 might just as well have been offered, so little likelihood did there seem of the prize ever being won. And it was not until six years later, after war experience had given a tremendous fillip to aeroplane design and construction that the possibility of such a feat was seriously entertained.

Very little was known in these days of weather conditions in

mid-Atlantic, except that they changed violently and unexpectedly. Airmen starting from Newfoundland or Canada in good weather might run into a storm half-way across strong enough to force them down, or into cold so intense as to cause engine failure. From Newfoundland to the Grand Banks they would have to fly over ice floes that would make any forced landing on the water hazardous in the extreme, and fog over the Grand Banks often reached a height of more than two thousand feet.

Today the scientific charting of weather maps has made the venture of an Atlantic flight, while still hazardous, incomparably less speculative than in the days of Alcock and Brown. In the years that have elapsed since Colonel Lindbergh flew to Paris, the collection and mapping of accurate weather data has become exact and comprehensive to a marvellous degree.

It was not until after Lindbergh's flight that meteorologists in Europe and America began to realize the immense value to aviators of observations made by steamship captains in all parts of the Atlantic. An international organization was formed to collect this data. Captains of ships quickly learnt the formulae used by meteorologists and wireless men. They were taught to make a standardized series of observations, which could be assembled into a simple code. This could then be translated into any language for the benefit of aviators. One shipping line after another began to contribute its regular quota of weather information, until nowadays it is possible to cover the north Atlantic with a "network" of data about prevailing winds, visibility, etc.

Today the scientific charting of weather maps has made the Atlantic complete and reliable of all the seven seas. If they had existed in the early days of Atlantic flying many a foolhardy flight would have been avoided and the lives of aviators spared.

But in Alcock and Brown's time, it was a matter of forecasting weather conditions from insufficient or unreliable data. Even the number of suitable flying days had not been ascertained.

For the lone flier, there are not many days in a year when the weather favours an Atlantic attempt. In the first place, it is essential to fly during a good moon. This limits the flying period to about six days a month. Violent storms rule out the winter months, confining flights to the months from May to September. There are thus only about thirty days in the entire year when weather conditions are likely to be favourable.

Three major dangers, apart from inclement weather, confront the Atlantic flier. The first is the risk of ice formation on the

wings which usually happens in wet fog between temperatures of twenty-eight to thirty-four degrees Fahrenheit. The second is the strong up and down currents which occur in the vicinity of electric storms. On a machine that is heavily loaded, these currents can impose terrific strains, and may cause sudden disaster by rapidly altering the loads on the structure of the aeroplane. It was the effect of such an electric storm which destroyed the American airship *Akron*.

Finally, sudden changes of barometric pressure can be of deadly peril. The aviator's height indicator is really nothing but a barometer which shows change in the pressure of the atmosphere when the aeroplane climbs or descends, except that this indicator shows height in feet instead of pressure in inches. Half an inch on the barometer is equivalent to about a thousand feet on the airman's height-scale and conditions have been known when an aeroplane starting out from Europe at two thousand feet has flown into the sea midway across the Atlantic while still recording two thousand feet on the pilot's height-indicator board.

Nevertheless in spite of the lack of scientific data and experience in the pioneer days of long-distance flying, men were not found wanting who were resolute and plucky enough to brave all the unknown terrors that nature could pit against them. Of such temper were Mr. H. G. Hawker and Commander Grieve, the ill-fated precursors of Alcock and Brown in the attempt to be first across the Atlantic.

Hawker, an Australian, was originally a motor mechanic. He came to England and was employed by Mr. T. O. M. Sopwith, one of the pioneers of flying. Hawker expressed a strong desire to fly, and went up for the first time in 1912. He quickly developed into an expert airman. He was killed in 1921 owing to his aeroplane catching fire.

On March 28, 1919, Mr. H. G. Hawker and Commander Grieve, his navigator, arrived in Newfoundland with a Sopwith machine they had christened the *Atlantic*. This was a biplane with a three hundred and fifty horse power Rolls-Royce engine. When fully loaded, the machine weighed nearly three tons, which included three hundred and fifty gallons of petrol, enough for twenty-two hours' flying.

The day before they left England, the airmen had carried out a test flight of one thousand eight hundred miles to prove that the aeroplane could fly the distance. They had decided to start from St. Johns, Newfoundland, on April 16, when there would be a full

moon, and they hoped to land in Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland, after flying eighteen or nineteen hours.

The upper half of the fuselage of their machine was a kind of "boat" fitted upside down, for streamlining. The fliers hoped that this "boat" would keep them afloat if they were forced down in mid-Atlantic. In addition, both men wore special safety suits designed to keep them afloat for a considerable period.

Hawker and Grieve carried out a test flight on April 10, and decided to make the great crossing two days later. Unfortunately they had trouble with their wireless set, also weather reports proved unfavourable.

The flight was postponed from day to day. Then, on May 6, three American seaplanes left Newfoundland to fly the Atlantic via the Azores. This was a bitter blow to the British airmen, as they felt that the honour of being first across the Atlantic would go to the United States. The weather reports continued very unfavourable however. Moreover, the Americans were flying much farther south, their route was being patrolled by warships, and they were to have a resting place half-way at the Azores.

Not until May 18, when weather conditions were favourable, did the venture seem possible. The chocks were pulled from under the wheels at 3.15 p.m., and the *Atlantic* took off at last on her ill-fated flight.

Trouble began only ten minutes after losing sight of land, when the aeroplane ran into the dense fog of the Newfoundland Banks. During the next four hours, the airmen had only one brief glimpse of the sea. They had to fight against terrific rain squalls, and a powerful north wind, which they had no reason to expect, suddenly sprang up, forcing the machine to the south out of her course.

The aeroplane was some five hundred miles out to sea, heading through black clouds in a furious gale, when Hawker began to notice that the radiator of his engine was getting hotter and hotter. The pipes were being choked for some reason he could not fathom. But he knew that he would be forced down unless he could keep the radiator cool. And at that moment Grieve, who had been working out their position by the sun and stars every half-hour, reported that they were now many miles off the steamship route.

The dense black clouds made it impossible to see ahead. Hawker was already flying at 10,000 feet; he dare not climb higher as the water in the radiator immediately began to boil. Instead, he was compelled again and again to glide down and cut off the engine to allow the water to cool. After one dive, the engine

refused to start until the machine was darting almost into the water. At that dread moment both men thought the end had come.

Once the clouds broke. Grieve glimpsed the Pole Star, and found that the machine had been driven by the gale one hundred and fifty miles from her course!

After nine hours from leaving St. Johns, half the petrol had gone in fighting the north wind, and the aeroplane was not yet half-way over. The radiator was still overheating; the water was swiftly boiling away and when it had gone—

The gallant attempt had failed, and Hawker and Grieve faced almost certain death. They decided that their only hope now was to fly backwards and forwards across their course for as long as the machine would hold out on the remote chance of sighting a vessel of some kind.

The airmen strained their eyes in vain to pierce the thickening mist, as the machine pitched and rolled amid the fury of the gale. Now and then they glimpsed the desolate seas beneath them, wracked by the tempest into a spume of billows in which it seemed their struggles could last only a few moments.

Suddenly, they observed a small ship on their left. So bad was the visibility that they were almost over it before they saw it. Grieve immediately fired three Verex lights as a distress signal. When the airmen saw that the ship had seen them, Hawker glided down and landed on the water.

The aeroplane landed only two hundred yards from the ship, but it was an hour and a half before Hawker and Grieve could be rescued, so formidable were the heavy seas. Indeed, had it not been for the fuselage "boat," the airmen would have certainly perished long before aid could have reached them.

The ship, a small steamer, the *Mary*, was bound from New Mexico to Perth. She had no wireless on board, and was crossing the Atlantic steamship route, so that she did not meet any ship with wireless with which she could communicate.

She had arrived literally in the nick of time, for Hawker, when he landed on the water, discovered that he had not a single drop of water in the radiator! He had flown just over one thousand miles over the Atlantic.

By this time the world had given up the airmen for lost. The following telegram was actually sent by King George V to Mrs. Hawker condoling her on the death of her husband:

"The King, fearing the worst must now be realized regarding



the fate of your husband, wishes to express his deep sympathy and that of the Queen in your sudden and tragic sorrow. His Majesty feels that the nation lost one of its most able and daring pilots, who sacrificed his life for the fame and honour of British flying."

On Sunday, May 15, exactly a week after Hawker and Grieve took off from St. Johns, the *Mary* came in sight of the Butt of Lewis, Scotland. Her siren was blowing, and she signalled to the coastguard that she had important news to communicate:

"Saved hands, Sop. aeroplane."

The coastguard signalled back:

"Is it Hawker?"

"Yes," ran up the signal flags of the *Mary*.

Meanwhile, undeterred by the awful experience of their rivals, Alcock and Brown went ahead with the preparations for their historic flight

Their machine was a Vickers *Vimy* Rolls-Royce biplane. In the summer of 1917, Vickers Ltd. were asked to design a heavy bombing machine, which was given the type name of *Vimy*. It was calculated that if this machine was equipped with two three hundred and fifty "Eagle" Mark VIII Rolls-Royce engines, it would be capable of flying a greater distance than that between St. Johns, Newfoundland, and the west coast of Ireland.

Accordingly, a scheme was prepared, and submitted to the Air Ministry on April 18, 1918, but owing to the war it was decided to postpone any attempt to fly the Atlantic. However, in April, 1919, a standard Vickers *Vimy* bomber was adapted for an Atlantic flight by the following alterations: (1) No armaments; (2) crew reduced from three to two; (3) petrol tank capacity increased to eight hundred and sixty-five gallons; (4) oil tank capacity increased to fifty gallons; (5) instruments and petrol pipe system adapted for extra tanks.

With this amount of fuel, it was estimated that the machine would have a flying range of two thousand four hundred and forty miles in a calm.

The aeroplane was erected and flown by the end of April, and shipped from England for Newfoundland on May 4. On June 9, Alcock and Brown carried out their first trial flight in the machine.

"During this flight," reported Alcock, "the machine behaved splendidly. However, the wireless installation gave slight trouble. I landed at a place known as Munday's Pond, where an aerodrome had previously been prepared under very adverse

circumstances, and after encountering great difficulties, such as blowing up rocks, removing walls, levelling small hills, and taking down fences, etc., obtained a clear run of four hundred yards.

"The defects which appeared during the first trial flight having received attention, a second trial flight was made on Thursday, June 12, when the aeroplane was then found to be quite in order.

"On Friday, June 13, the tanks were filled up with petrol, lubricating oil, and water. My intention was to make an early start on the morning of Saturday, June 14, but this was impossible owing to a strong cross wind. The engines were tested for the last time, and ran to perfection. The petrol tanks were then finally replenished for the start.

"Later on during the day, weather conditions became more favourable. Brown and I then had our final meal before starting, seated under the wings of the aeroplane."

To the casual observer, Alcock and Brown must have seemed a curious pair to have been selected for one of the most hazardous adventures in the history of man's conquest of time and space. Alcock, with his cheerful ruddy face, tousled hair, and ready quip delivered in the broadest of accents, appeared a typical "Lancashire lad", Brown, quiet, aloof, taciturn, with the reserve of the scholar, seemed more fitted for the study or the laboratory than this nightmare journey through the unknown.

But the Vickers company had chosen its champions wisely. Each was well endowed for the superhuman trial that lay before them.

Born in Manchester in 1892, Alcock had obtained the Royal Aero Club's flying certificate at Brooklands before he was twenty years old. In 1914, flying a Maurice Farman biplane fitted with a hundred horse power Sunbeam engine, he was third in an air race from London to Manchester and back.

On the outbreak of war, he joined the R.N.A.S. and for a time instructed cadets at Lastchurch. Then he went to the Turkish front, where, after gaining the record for long-distance bombing raids, he was eventually captured.

Brown, born in Glasgow in 1886, was fascinated even as a boy by the problems of aerial navigation. He joined the R.F.C. in 1915, was wounded, taken prisoner, and transferred to Switzerland. After his repatriation, in December 1917, he went to the Ministry of Munitions, where he was employed on the construction of aero engines.

Alcock was the first to pay tribute after the flight to the

uncanny skill of Brown as a navigator, which resulted in the airman landing only ten miles out of the course they had planned when they took off from Newfoundland. Though the biplane was equipped with directional wireless apparatus, Brown relied chiefly upon a system of navigation of his own, based upon the theory of marine navigation, altered and adapted to the problems of flying. He had also devised a method of making an accurate "dead reckoning" by calculating with the special instruments the distance flown by the biplane from time to time, as well as determining the "drift" of the machine through being blown out of its course by side winds.

Bad weather conditions, with fog and drizzling rain, faced the airmen on that June afternoon, but they were so weary of postponements that they were resolved to make the attempt at all hazards. Then, just before the start, an accident happened, which, slight as it was, at first threatened another day's delay.

The plane was held head on to the driving wind by ropes and pickets. One of the ropes became loose, and whipped by the force of the gale, was caught in the under-carriage. It was pulled tight across the copper piping, severely indenting it. The airmen had to wait while new piping was installed by mechanics, turning a deaf ear meanwhile to the cry of a woman spectator that the mishap was a certain omen of disaster.

As Alcock and Brown climbed into the cockpit, other Jeremiahs in the crowd on that windswept aerodrome near St. Johns were shouting that the airmen would kill themselves even before they took off. They had some reason for their fears. The machine was going off up-hill in face of a forty-mile gale.

This would probably have been safe enough with a plane of normal load on a good aerodrome. But Alcock and Brown were carrying three and a half tons of petrol, giving a total load of five tons, and were taking off from an imperfect ground. Without doubt, the start was a perilous one for those days.

It was exactly 5.13 p.m. (British Summer Time) when the airmen took off. With a cheery "Good-bye!" and a farewell wave of his hand, Captain Alcock gave the signal to remove the chocks from under the wheels. The engines roared out deafeningly, the biplane trembled for a moment as if in hesitation, like some great bird "feeling its wings," then moved spasmodically forward.

It gained speed, rocking and lurching over the uneven ground. And now, as it sped onwards like an express train, it was headed to the

onlookers as if the immense, heavily-burdened machine would be unable to take the air.

Two hundred yards, and the biplane was still dashing and bumping forward like some earth-bound monster. Three hundred yards—would she never rise? Then suddenly the machine seemed to jump into the air, zoomed, just in time, over the first confronting fence.

A hoarse roar of cheering went up from the tense crowd, to change, a few seconds later, into wild cries of fear and horror, "She's crashing!" And indeed, such was the contour of the countryside as to suggest to those on the ground that the machine was dashing into a little wood. Instead, she cleared easily, climbed to one thousand feet, and flew at a hundred miles per hour over the town and the ice floes beating against the shore.

Brown then gave Alcock his direction—a south-east course of one hundred and twenty-four degrees magnetic. At the start, visibility was fairly good, but ahead lay the Newfoundland fog bank, and soon they were flying between a bank of clouds and the fog. "We did not see either the sea or the sky for a period of seven hours, with the exception of an occasional glimpse of both, in small patches," said Alcock afterwards.

The airmen had been flying only twenty minutes when they made a terrifying discovery. The armature arm connected to the propeller of the wireless set had been shored completely off. This damage made it impossible for the fliers to send out wireless messages. Electricity for this purpose was generated by this small propeller, operated by the pressure of the air when the machine was in flight. If the machine was in danger of being forced down, therefore, Alcock and Brown could not make an SOS call to shipping in the vicinity. Their only safety now was in success.

As darkness began to fall, even worse weather conditions were encountered, the clouds and fog became denser and denser, and eventually the airmen found themselves driving through icy sleet. They were now flying at a height of four thousand feet, and could see neither sea nor sky, as they were between two layers of clouds, one at two thousand, the other at six thousand feet.

For half an hour, a clear patch of sky was seen, enabling Brown to check his position from the Polar Star, Vega and the moon. But this was followed by a fog so thick and dark that the fliers could see neither moon nor stars.

Then, suddenly, amid the all-pervading blackness, the machine

began to spin horribly. "This was caused through the air speed indicator failing to register," records Alcock. "It jammed when it stood at ninety. This was probably due to the damage to the pilot tube caused when the wireless generator propeller was sheared.

"I did not know what I was doing," he adds. "I did some comic stunts. I can remember looping the loop, and then performing a steep spiral. When we came out of the mist, I found the machine was only a few feet from the water and flying on its back. Of course, when I saw the horizon, I was able to regain control and put the machine on its true course. I then climbed to six thousand feet, hoping to get out of the fog. I got on top of it twice, only to find we were flying between two banks of cloud again."

The machine was now covered with ice, and fighting head-on against a blizzard of hail and snow. The radiator shutters were jammed with ice: Brown had to climb up times without number to chip it off with a knife. Frozen particles now clogged the air speed indicator, which again began to give serious trouble.

Through this chaos of sleet and darkness, battling through the gale, climbing, hovering and diving in vain efforts to discern sky or sea, the airmen struggled for six long hours, during which Brown was able to take only four readings of their position.

To add to their difficulties, the communication telephones had broken down, and no voice could have made itself heard above the terrific roar of those three hundred horse power engines. Fortunately, both airmen knew their jobs perfectly. "All we needed to do," said Alcock, "was to tap one another on the shoulder and go through the motion of drinking. We ate sandwiches and chocolate, though we were not very hungry. But we both had a thirst all the time, and the ale and coffee soon disappeared. We shared the last cup of coffee."

Just before dawn began to break, Alcock made another desperate attempt to get above the clouds, climbing steadily until the machine reached a height of eleven thousand feet.

"At this height," said Alcock, "we saw the sun several times trying to force its way through the clouds, and Brown eventually succeeded in fixing his position. After this, we decided to descend, and almost reached the surface of the sea before obtaining clear visibility.

"Here the wind was blowing very strongly from the south-west. To counteract this, Brown thought it advisable to steer a more south-westerly course, flying in this direction close to the

water for about forty minutes. We still had doubts about our position, though we knew we were there or thereabouts.

"Then we saw the islands of Feshal and Turbot, and knew we were all right, though we could not see the mainland, owing to rain and low clouds. The mainland was not visible until we were practically over it, and then only the hills.

"In another ten minutes, the masts of Clifden wireless station suddenly appeared. We circled round this, firing Vercy signals, to which no reply was received. While flying round looking for a suitable landing place, we passed over Clifden town, where more Vercy signals were fired, again without reply. Observing no suitable landing ground in that neighbourhood, we returned to the wireless station, where I spotted what appeared to be a nice meadow and decided to descend."

The "nice meadow," however, turned out to be a bog. The wheels sank axle-deep into it, and the *Vimy* toppled over on her nose. The lower plane was badly damaged and broken, and both propellers sank deeply.

Luckily, however, both airmen were quite unhurt. They clambered out of the machine, and found themselves surrounded by a group of twenty or thirty wireless operators, officers, soldiers and passers-by, who could not believe at first that the Atlantic fliers were arrived. They thought it was the landing of a scouting plane.

"We are the Vickers *Vimy* machine just come over from Newfoundland," explained Alcock. "We have had a terrible trip. But at any rate we have landed in the softest part of Ireland." Then a gasp and cheer of admiration went up from the little throng.

Enough petrol remained in the *Vimy's* tanks for a further flight of eight hundred miles, the engines were undamaged, and up to the moment of landing, the whole machine was in excellent condition.

Brown was tired out after the great ordeal, and went to bed, but Alcock, after a bath and a breakfast of bacon and eggs, hurried back to the machine for his mails and instruments.

King George V received the news as he was leaving the church service at Windsor. Through General Sykes, controller of civil aviation, he immediately sent the following message of congratulation.

"The King was delighted to receive your welcome announcement that Captain Alcock and Lieutenant Brown have safely landed in Ireland after their transatlantic flight. His Majesty

wishes you to communicate at once with these officers and to convey to them the King's warmest congratulations on the success of their splendid achievement."

Later, both Captain Alcock and Lieutenant Brown were knighted by the King in recognition of their historic flight. It would be idle to deny that luck played its part in their triumph. Had anything gone seriously wrong, they had little hope of life, not to mention success. Nothing did go seriously wrong. On the other hand, but for the superhuman nerve and skill exhibited by each of these fine airmen, failure and disaster would have been the inevitable result instead of the greatest flying feat ever accomplished up to that time.

# THE BATTLE OF THE FALKLANDS

By

CHRISTOPHER SWANN

**T**HE Battle of the Falkland Islands, the first British naval victory, and the most decisive sea fight of the World War—not excluding Jutland—was fought on December 8, 1914.

Wherever old naval war men meet nowadays—grizzled a bit some of them; looking forward to the "long trick" ashore; in "Pompey's" main street, down the lighted avenue where a thirsty man may get a drink; the wardroom of some ship come permanently to her moorings; out east, or sweating amid muddy rivers—you may hear, if you are popular, over the "other half," the story of the breakfast before battle. It is a legend in the service that is called silent but is really most loquacious.

And this is the story. It is the tale of a very great adventure, a gigantic game of bluff—and the triumph of a man who made revenge a thing of hard knocks.

Here briefly are the facts; then to the story. Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, with his squadron of battleships, cruisers and destroyers, completely wiped out the squadron of Admiral von Spee off the Falkland Islands in an action lasting six and a half hours. The German casualties were two thousand officers and men; the British seven men killed; four wounded. Von Spee went down with his ships. Only one German ship escaped. She was the *Dresden*; she was to cause trouble later, before being hammered to pieces in a river mouth. There is no naval parallel to this action. British supremacy at sea was challenged by a more or less obscure defeat in the Pacific by a raiding squadron. Sturdee stopped the panic, sank every raider except one and restored confidence to empire trade routes.

After the Battle of the Falklands vessels were able to leave their Pacific and South Atlantic ports in confidence that Britannia did actually rule the waves. They thanked the British Navy, and Admiral Sturdee in particular, but Sturdee was grateful enough to know that he had wiped out the defeat put upon Britain's Navy by the tragic engagement at Coronel, where Rear-Admiral Cradock's squadron—outnumbered but fighting gallantly, just as the Germans did later—were wiped out.



After victory, on December 14, Lord Charles Beresford referred to the "old touch of the Navy." Victory, he said, was essential to this country—"It has cleared the air . . . Perhaps we shall hear a little less about 'What's the Navy doing?'" Then he referred to Colonel: "Sir Christopher Cradock, his officers and men, can say with Nelson, Thank God I did my duty."

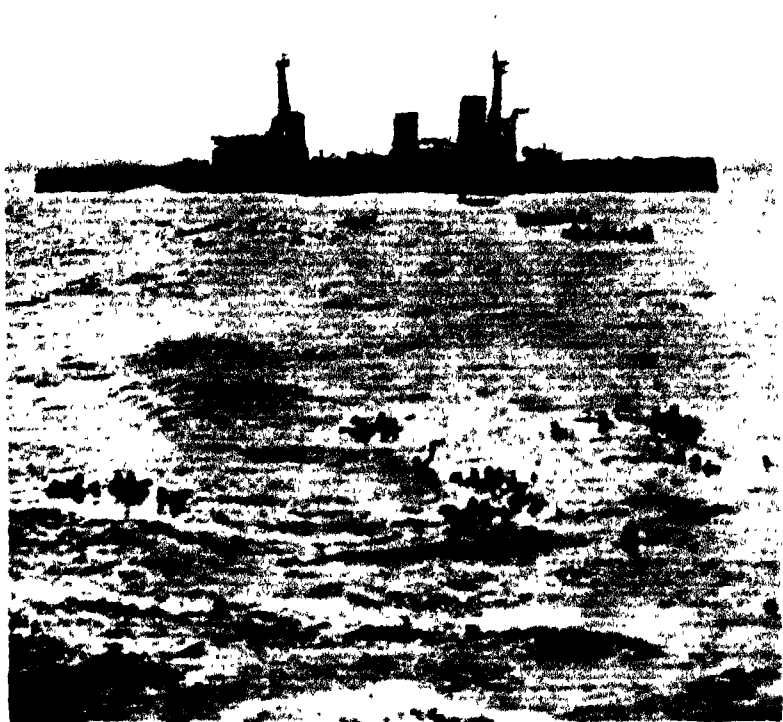
The Falklands are a group of islands in the South Atlantic Ocean belonging to Britain. There are two large, and two hundred small islands about 310 miles east of the Strait of Magellan—famous in history. Imagine a great pear-shaped piece of land, bordered on the left (west) by the Pacific Ocean, and on the right (east) by the South Atlantic. It is the Argentine Republic and other states. Trade routes pass to Cape Horn and Rio de Janeiro; Valparaiso to Monte Video; Capetown to Rio, too. A key route for shipping.

What manner of man was this Admiral Sturdee, who won so decisive a victory with so little loss? He is dead, he died on May 7, 1937, and he exemplified the perfect type of naval man who learned half his job ashore. Had he not had the experience of land conditions, of subtlety as well as of might, he may not have been so successful. But because he was able to apply the lessons he learned in the secret places of admiralty while actually standing upon his quarter-deck he was able to destroy a German squadron and rid two of the Seven Seas of a menace.

Frederick Charles Doveton Sturdee was born on June 9, 1859, his father being Captain F. R. Sturdee, R.N.; his mother the daughter of an army colonel. He went to the Old Royal Naval School at New Cross and entered the Navy at the age of twelve. His scholastic career was brilliant; he was twice awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal United Institute. He saw service in the Egyptian War against Arabi Pasha, for which he received the Alexandria Star and the Khedive's Bronze Star, and at Samoa, in 1899, his handling of a delicate situation earned him the C.M.G. He was at the Admiralty as Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence. In 1905 he became assistant to Lord Charles Beresford ("Charlie" Beresford) in the Mediterranean but because he was an adherent of Beresford's policy he later found himself out of sympathy with the Board of Admiralty under Lord Fisher and naturally his administrative career came to an end.

So he went back to sea as rear-admiral, stepping from command to command until he was recalled to the Admiralty where the outbreak of war found him as Chief of War Staff to Prince Louis of

## THE BATTLE OF THE FALKLANDS



### AFTER THE SINKING OF THE "GNEISENAU"

*This crack ship of the German Navy was sunk after five hours' fighting (Above) A remarkable photograph of her survivors in the water.*

## HOW ADMIRAL BYRD LIVED IN THE ARCTIC



### AIR CONQUEROR OF BOTH POLES

*(Top) Admiral Byrd (centre) with Floyd Benness (right), his greatest friend, before the North Pole flight in 1926. (Bottom) The plane on the raft taking it from the ship to the taking-off base.*

Battenberg—afterwards Lord Milford Haven, but better remembered as the man who saved the British Fleet by his dramatic order of recall when war was threatening. In November, 1914, Lord Louis resigned office; Fisher came back. Almost simultaneously came the news of the defeat and the death at Coronel of Sir Christopher Cradock, overtaken by superior force.

It is a curious fact constantly recurring in history that Cradock had not long before the action been on terms of friendship with the man who defeated him. They had met in China stations and had struck up a friendship which was to end dramatically amid bursting shells at Coronel.

The shock to British prestige had to be avenged; in those waters were not enough ships to avenge it. So Lord Fisher detached from the Grand Fleet the battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* with Sturdee in command—his command was probably the greatest ever given to a seaman of his rank—"Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic and South Pacific stations." It implied that everything afloat in those two oceans were under his control. History has shown what an effective control it was. Vessels were told to rendezvous—navalese for collect—at two places, some at Monte Video, others at the Falkland Islands. There was to be no mistake this time. No wireless signals were allowed—for secrecy's sake—the only signals were visual.

On December 8, everything was ready. Sturdee was at Port Stanley—chief port of the Falklands—with his squadron. Somewhere afar off was the German squadron. It is interesting to show what that meant in terms of guns and death. Here are the teams, as it were, lined up for the match:

*Britain.*

Battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* (17,250 tons), 25 knots, eight 12-inch guns, sixteen 4-inch guns.

Armoured cruisers *Cornwall* and *Kent* (9,800 tons), fourteen 6-inch guns.

Light cruisers *Glasgow* and *Bristol* (4,800 tons), two 6-inch and ten 4-inch guns.

Armoured cruiser *Carnarvon*, four 7.5-inch guns, six 6-inch guns.

*Germany.*

Armoured cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, eight 8.2-inch guns, six 6-inch guns.

Light cruiser *Dresden*, twelve 4.1-inch guns.

*Leipzig* and *Nürnberg*, twelve 4.1-inch guns.

There can be no doubt that the Falklands battle foiled the German plot to invade South Africa, assisted by disaffected Boers. Liners were ready to transport troops, including *Vaterland*, the biggest liner afloat; thousands of rifles and cases of ammunition were in readiness. Von Spee's squadron was to do the escorting. But all those plans were brought to nothing because von Spee could not resist the tempting bait which the British Admiralty, through Admiral Sturdee, put before him. Some time previously a German naval code book was found in a German steamer seized at Melbourne, together with a cipher key. The key had been altered since the seizure but experts worked on it at the Australian Naval College at Jervis Bay. Thus, soon after the defeat at Coronel, on November 1, the plan of entrapping von Spee was hatched.

November 11—fateful date in war history—Sturdee left the Grand Fleet and steamed away with the battle cruisers *Inflexible* and *Invincible* and reached the Falklands without being challenged. By December 7 he was reinforced by Admiral Stoddart in *Carnarvon* and the cruisers *Cornwall*, *Kent* and *Glasgow*. But previously the wireless had been busy. Von Spee was told in the code from the seized code book to bombard the Falklands; at the same time Sturdee sent out a wireless message ordering the old battleship *Canopus*, which had been too slow to reach Cradock in time to share his fate, to put into Port Stanley in the Falklands where—the message said—the new coast defence guns would protect her. Now Sturdee knew this message would be intercepted by the Germans. It was. Von Spee knew quite well there were *no* guns at Port Stanley, so he thought it would be a good thing before proceeding on his African invasion plan to dash to the Falklands, wipe out the lone battle cruiser and occupy the place.

What he did not know was that Sturdee was waiting "round the corner" with two modern battle cruisers and several other small war vessels. So von Spee steamed to his doom. About eight o'clock the German ships were sighted as smudges of smoke on the horizon. Alarm bells rang. As Admiral Sturdee said later :

"Our men were grimy after coaling when the Germans were seen approaching. I made a signal to get up steam and while so, we had breakfast and washed so we were fresh and clean for the fight."

Not the "Nelson touch" but the "Drake touch." Not a game of bowls to finish, but a good breakfast and then a good clean up so as to meet the enemy all navy-fashion and ship-shape.

A woman played a great part in the battle. She was Mrs. Creamer, the daughter of an English professor, who had settled in the islands. On the morning of the fight she was at home in her farmstead at Fitzroy with her three children, and two maids. She saw the German ships approaching, ordered her maids to saddle two horses and ride in turn to the top of the hill behind her home and report to her every few minutes. The maids spared neither themselves nor the horses, and the almost minute to minute information they brought to their mistress was telephoned to the harbour authorities who, being at a lower level, could not see the advancing vessels. They in turn sent messages to Admiral Sturdee. Thus this woman's observations were responsible for the movements of the British ships.

After the battle, Mrs. Creamer was presented with a silver salver by the Admiralty, and the king invested her with the O.B.E. The galloping maids were also rewarded. As recently as 1930 Mrs. Creamer visited London and received a great welcome.

But then another factor had existed in this great adventure. The weather took a hand. History is full of "ifs," and if von Spee had not encountered a storm when rounding Cape Horn on his way to the Falklands he would not have been delayed—he would have arrived in time to do what he wanted to do—what he was sent to do—smash the small forces there at long range and make the islands ready for occupation. As it was, his big ships on the way round the Cape—hated by all mariners in days of sail and many in steam days, too—wallowed in terrific seas. Part of the deck cargo of coal, loaded up in anticipation of a long voyage in unfriendly seas, had to be thrown overboard from the cruisers in order to save the cruisers themselves. All this meant delay; it might have meant the abandonment of the whole project, but here von Spee had the first piece of luck he had up to now experienced.

A British collier, under sail, came staggering round the Cape, heartily sick of herself. She would not have been there at all except that there were no steam bottoms available in that region at that time. Von Spee saw in her if not an angel in disguise—and no angel could disguise itself more adequately than a British collier—at least a present help in time of trouble. So he seized her, took her gently into a sheltered anchorage and relieved her of all the coal she carried; thus replenishing that which had had to be thrown overboard during the storm. But those few hours meant just that small margin which might have turned complete defeat into at least a partial victory. See how the multi-coloured thread of luck

winds its way through these things; for while von Spee was capturing his collier and transferring her coal to his bunkers, Sturdee, hope in his heart that he might be able to avenge his friend and colleague Cradock of the *Coronel* disaster, was speeding under forced draught with his two battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, on the last lap of the spectacular dash from Cromarty Firth. A seven thousand mile journey to fight a battle—and even then Sturdee thought he might be too late.

They came joyously, these men in two battle cruisers; as men would go to a picnic, thinking nothing of death or shattered limbs or things worse than shattered limbs, but only thinking of the great adventure they were sharing with the "Big Noise" on the quarter-deck that they knew and liked so well. Sturdee was always a sailor's man. He had gone through the mill. He knew what work was; and discipline; and relaxation. In his hands all three were given their proportionate quota. They were happy to leave at last the apparently unending day's miles from civilization as they knew it; with home quaysides only a memory, shore leave almost an impossibility; to follow someone they knew into what might be the "real thing."

They did not know, these men, that the real thing on this occasion was to be more or less a chase after a dog with his tail between his legs; but even so early in the war they had something to "wipe off the slate." The battle of the Falklands did not provide them with all the "glory" of war they had expected on the sea; later many of them with their admiral they liked so much, were to see war at Jutland shorn of its glory. But they arrived, and they were in time.

On came the Germans led by *Gneisenau* and *Leipzig*; the men could be seen on her decks at action stations. Guns were trained on the wireless station ashore. *Gneisenau* was the crack ship for gunnery in the German Navy; she had just won the Kaiser's Cup. *Canopus* opened fire with her 12-inch guns and at that moment *Kent* drew out of Port William followed by *Glasgow*. Then round the corner of Cape Pembroke steamed *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, decks cleared for action, every man at his battle station waiting for the word to open the ball. The German vessels in a wide sweep turned tail and fled. What must have been their consternation to find not one cruiser and an unprotected shore, but a whole squadron appearing in ones and twos from totally unexpected quarters? They fled, and wireless messages to their following ships ordered instant flight.

*Invincible* opened the ball at seventeen thousand yards—and it became from that moment a running fight. With *Inflexible* she engaged *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*; *Glasgow*, *Leipzig*; and *Kent* chose *Nurnberg*. The armed liner *Seydlitz* and two large colliers next appeared and were chased and caught by *Macedonia* who put prize crews aboard.

When the first shock of seeing the British squadron had been realized, von Spee acted promptly. He knew he had no chance in a straight fight against superior odds—so he made it a running fight. His ships deserted naval tradition and the usual order of battle. They scattered, but that did not save them; they were out-manœuvred both in speed and seamanship. *Scharnhorst* was sunk three hours after the first shot was fired. *Gneisenau* two hours later, *Leipzig* was sunk by *Cornwall*, and *Nurnberg* by *Kent*. There were no survivors of *Scharnhorst*, while of *Gneisenau's* complement of seven hundred only one hundred were rescued. *Scharnhorst* was on fire when she plunged beneath the waves taking every man with her. As she sank her crew sang patriotic songs. Von Spee's sons were in the battle, one in *Gneisenau*, the other in *Leipzig*; both were lost; so that the fight cost this German family a father and two sons.

There were dramatic incidents in plenty during the fight between the British cruiser *Glasgow* and the German *Leipzig*. The German ship was set on fire and hundreds of the crew gathered on the fore-castle. *Glasgow's* captain asked them to surrender but while many voices cried, "Yes, we surrender," a gun was fired from the ship at *Glasgow*. Promptly came the answer—a shell which killed seventy of those desperately brave men. They fired a Verey light in token of submission—the survivors jumped into the sea. Some were rescued; the ship sank.

German discipline was splendid. Shells were crashing on to the decks; gun crews lay bleeding, dismembered some of them, but those who remained aimed, fired, repaired smashed tackle so far as they could, moving the dead and the dying from under their feet as they did so—while below, the surgeons went about their grim work. They did not know that very soon they, their patients and the instruments they were plying so ruthlessly—necessarily ruthlessly—would be at the bottom of the sea. Gallant men, these Germans. They fought to the very end and died; almost every one of them. What a gesture was that made by the flagship of von Spee. She was nearly done, shot to pieces, yet in the last extremity turned towards the British and tried to shield *Gneisenau*. As she sank after



her unavailing heroism four hundred men struggled in the icy cold water. There was no single survivor—the two hundred and fifteen Germans saved included not one of her admiral's ship's company.

*Scharnhorst* had suffered a battery by shell after shell that few ships, not even afterwards in the Jutland days, were called upon to endure. As the admiral's flagship she was naturally looked upon as the "big boy" of the squadron. "First get the big boy," used to run the naval slogan, "and the little fellow will follow." It dates back to the days of Trafalgar when the Frenchmen, though they killed England's greatest admiral, could not conquer the "big boy"—the *Victory*, even though her captain lay dying within her hull. So once the *Scharnhorst* had taken her men, her admiral, beneath the sea—once the orders ceased to come from the flickering signal lamp of the flagship, there was little heart for the rest of them in that fight. Even if there had been after they received their admiral's signal at the beginning of the action, "Battle not to be accepted; concentrate with course N.E. High speed. Steam to be raised in all boilers."

It is not easy to describe the battle of the Falklands because, as has been said, it was less a battle than a pursuit, but this account by an eye witness in *Invincible* is illuminating. "At 10.25 a.m.," he said, "the unforgettable signal 'Chase' flew from our halliards. *Inflexible* and our ship tackled *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, the crack gunnery ships of the Germany Navy, but it was not until 1.25 that they replied." Presumably the German vessels were too busy making their preparations for a fast flight to give battle. They had heard their admiral's signal; they were trying all they knew to obey it. On this day their duty was not to fight but to live to fight another day.

"So great was the range," goes on the observer, "that it was extremely difficult to tell whether we were finding our mark . . . from 2 to 2.30 p.m. was the most strenuous stage of the engagement. *Scharnhorst's* fire gradually slackened, and smoke and flames denoted that she had a serious fire forward. Her upperworks were a shambles, and through shell holes in her sides could be seen, even at the great distance we were away, the red glow of the flames between decks."

She fought on however until four o'clock, then she listed heavily to port and sank. *Gneisenau* kept up a similarly hopeless fight. She lost her funnel quite early in the action, causing a red glow to ascend into the sunset sky. Long before she was actually sunk she looked as though she were a vessel stricken to death because of

this red glow; but she steamed on gallantly. Then at six o'clock she seemed to fall over on her side; men walked on her hull and then she disappeared. There was a heavy explosion, another observer relates, as though something had blown up inside her and she sank under the sea; there were bubbles, wreckage, a smoke pall turning from yellow to black—a deep, oily black—and that was all.

To one who has not seen a ship mortally wounded by heavy shell-fire, imagination will simply not supply the horror of it. One may think of the ship ploughing through the seas as fast as her screaming turbines will send her; her stokers labouring like fiends in the depths to get every last ounce of steam from straining boilers—the water rising in twin white curves from the bows, creaming away in wild eddies from the madly whirling screws. She is a picture of energy incarnate. Few men are visible, only those whose duty keeps them in view—but behind every turret, every piece of armour plating are busy hands working at full pressure in the ordered confusion of the navy; an ear glued to the voice-pipe beside each gun, listening to the gun orders from the bridge as well as one can listen in the inferno of sound. Orders like this come through: "Green—Range eight thousand. Deflection—two on right."

Green means starboard, right side where the green light is shown. Deflection means that though the gun is aimed at the target it will, with right deflection, hit a target which is moving to the right.

And added to this horror of sound is the tear and rush of the ship through the water—at the speed of an average train; rolling perhaps, pitching as only battleships know how; taking seas green over the bows which drench everyone before they reach the lee scuppers. Then imagine that ship struck by a salvo of shells each weighing a quarter of a ton—one bursts in the engine room; the engines stop, she wallows in the trough of the sea; another strikes the magazine. There is a crash and a glare that lights up the sky; a huge torrent of water rises hundreds of feet illuminated like at some ghastly firework display by the dull red glow that denotes fire down below. Huge billowing masses of smoke, yellow then black, the splash of falling wreckage unseen but heard—and then a slowly clearing sea—and nothing. No ship, no bobbing heads in the water, just nothing. And this is not a fanciful description, but it is exactly what happened to the *Nürnberg*. One moment she was there, fighting back grimly; then came the noise and the smoke pall which served as a pall to her nine hundred men.

Then there is the story of *Kent*. She was not so fast as her

sister ships and she feared she would be too late for the action—so everything of wood aboard the ship was broken up; wardroom and gunroom furniture, sea boxes, even the boats, were soaked in petrol and pushed into the furnaces to increase the steam pressure. It was a new version of "burning your boats" and it succeeded because she came up with her quarry—engaged and sank her. Actually by these Homeric measures she developed a higher speed than she had achieved on her trials—just a way they have in the navy.

In our current naval history there is no episode to compare with this. It had been handed down from the days almost of Canute that you must pursue your enemy until you destroy him or until he destroys you. It has been in most cases a thing impossible to achieve; in this case it would have followed tradition had not the men of the *Kent* risen above every order in naval regulations, which provide for the "comfort and best management of men sailing his majesty's ships on the seas on their lawful occasions."

Therefore *Kent* "burnt her boats" and everything else she had to burn, because *Kent* was one of those ships that would not be left out of any spot of bother—as naval men in those days called the giving and taking of life. *Kent* fulfilled her destiny, she steamed three knots faster than she steamed in her trials in pursuit of the fleeing *Nürnberg*; and she sank it. There were no survivors. At one moment she pitched her bows clear of the water and then the next instant slid back, sickeningly, into the encroaching sea. A huge wall of water rose over the forecandle head beating wildly against the ship now standing at an angle of forty-five degrees. There she stayed for a moment—dark shapes jumped from somewhere on her decks into the water, bobbed, and were seen no more. The water was icy cold.

It seemed remarkable that so big a thing—a thing that had cost so much in money and work, could be destroyed so quickly; leaving no trace on the sea except a few scattered pieces of wreckage—it seemed, as an observer of this tragic scene said, "So wasteful."

Admiral Sturdee was created a baronet "of the Falkland Islands," in recognition of his success. Lord Jellicoe spoke of him as "an officer who has made a special study of tactics." After the war Sturdee was made an honorary member of Lloyd's and said in thanks: "It was an interesting fight off the Falkland Islands. It was a good stand-up fight, and I always like to say I have a great regard for my great opponent."

Later, Sturdee was at the Battle of Jutland, May 31, 1916, and was mentioned in despatches. His honours include the Order of

St. Maurice and St. Lazarus of Italy; St. Anne of Russia; the Rising Sun of Japan; the Striped Tiger of China; the French Croix de Guerre. On July 5, 1921, he was promoted Admiral of the Fleet, and in the peace awards he received a parliamentary grant of ten thousand pounds "in recognition of his services."

In 1925 the victory was celebrated by the erection of a monument made in a Cornish granite quarry, which now stands on the biggest island of the Falklands overlooking the place of battle. At the top is a bronze model of the first British man-of-war resting on a globe with waves beneath, representing Britain's supremacy of the sea. The inscription reads: "In commemoration of the battle of the Falkland Islands which saved this colony from capture by the enemy."

The Admiralty said: "One of the greatest merits in the action is the small list of casualties due to the able handling of their ships by their captains, who utilized the power of the guns and the speed of the ships to the best advantage. Further, the effective fire at long range and the thorough organization were very evident; and enabled the action to be fought with success against an enemy who displayed splendid courage, determination and efficiency"—a statement thoroughly in accordance with the traditions of the British Navy, ever eager to give honour to a defeated—or victorious foe.

And here is the epitaph. When the news of the victory was telephoned to Jellicoe at Scapa Flow he was in his berth reading the Bible. It was opened at the passage from the Psalms: "*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us but unto Thy Name give praise.*"

# HOW ADMIRAL BYRD LIVED IN THE ARCTIC

By

T. C. BRIDGES and H. HESSELL TILTMAN

ON July 11, 1897, Dr. Salomon August Andrée, a well-known Swedish explorer, rose from Danes Island, Spitzbergen, in a large balloon, trusting to the winds of heaven to waft him across the gigantic waste of Arctic ice. The balloon drifted away in a nor'-easterly direction and was lost to sight. It was never seen again.

Thirty-three years elapsed before the mystery of Andrée's fate was solved. Then, in the summer of 1930, a Norwegian scientific expedition discovered his body and those of his companions lying under a thin sheet of ice in Franz Josef Land, to the north of Russia.

His was a fantastically daring experiment, but one which, in the light of more modern knowledge, was doomed from the beginning to disaster.

Early in the present century dirigible airships began to assume existence, and in 1909 a wealthy American, Mr. Walter Wellman, made another attempt to reach the North Pole by air. His airship had a gas-bag one hundred and eighty-two feet long, with a diameter of fifty-two feet, and was driven by an engine of forty horse-power. From it hung a huge guide-rope stuffed with provisions.

Two hours out and forty miles from the starting-point the guide-rope, dragging over the ice, broke, and the airship leaped fourteen hundred feet into the air and became unmanageable. Gas was let out, and with great difficulty the dirigible was brought back to her base. This accident undoubtedly saved the lives of her crew, for at that date the so-called dirigible was very little better than a balloon, and could not be driven at more than twenty miles an hour. The weighted guide-rope was a crazy experiment.

Ever since aerial travel became possible men of vision have dreamed of reaching the Poles by air and so avoiding the endless and terrible toil of hauling sledges over hundreds of miles of broken ice. Yet both Poles were conquered by men afoot before ever

aircraft reached the perfection necessary for such long flights. Peary had the honour of being the first to reach the North Pole, and Amundsen was the hero of that famous dash across the Antarctic continent by which he won from the gallant Scott the privilege of being the first man to stand at the earth's Southern Pole.

Although only a few years have elapsed since these splendid feats of courage and endurance, yet in that brief time aircraft has improved so immensely that both Poles have been reached by air. Yet so far there is only one man who has travelled by air to both "ends" of the earth. That is the American, Admiral Byrd.

Byrd is an utterly fearless man of the type of Lindbergh, yet differing from that great pilot in the fact that he seldom acts on impulse. With Byrd everything is the result of long and careful forethought. He was one of those who had long planned the use of the aeroplane for exploration purposes, and so as early as 1926 succeeded in reaching the North Pole by air.

In the following summer he and three companions made a transatlantic flight in his big three-engined *America*. They started from New York on the last day of June in fine weather, but beyond Newfoundland struck storm, and drove across the ocean through blinding mists, being at times forced to rise to fifteen thousand feet in order to get above the clouds.

Near Ireland the weather became worse than ever. There was a hurricane of rain and wind such as had not been seen in the English Channel for many summers. Yet the powerful *America* breasted the storms, and, travelling at an average speed of one hundred miles an hour, reached the French coast. Byrd—he was a commander then, not an admiral—tried to strike a straight course from Brest to Paris, but the fog and darkness were impenetrable. Also his compass had gone wrong. He flew round and round in great circles, searching in vain for a landing-place, while, minute by minute, the petrol gauge sank toward zero. At half-past three in the morning, when their plane had but a few gallons of petrol left, they found themselves over the French coast, and decided to try to land on the beach. But the big plane hit the sea some hundreds of yards out, and with such force as to carry away the wheels. The whole landing-carriage broke up and floated away. Byrd carried aboard the plane two little rubber collapsible boats, and it was through his foresight in bringing these that the lives of himself and his crew were saved.

Two fishermen of Ver-sur-Mer were the first to see the *America* crash into shallow water. They ran for the mayor, and he came out just in time to meet the soaked and exhausted voyagers.

It was about as narrow an escape as any Atlantic flyers ever experienced. The *America* herself was caught in the surf and badly damaged, but Byrd succeeded in saving his compass, wireless set, and navigating instruments.

Two years before this adventure Byrd had already begun preparation for his South Pole flight. He had made up his mind to do the thing on a big scale, and the cost of the expedition is believed to have amounted to nearly \$1,000,000. He spent \$50,000 on scientific apparatus alone, and brought one hundred Eskimo dogs for pulling sledges.

The vessel he chose was an old Norwegian ice-ship, which he reconditioned and named the *City of New York*. Built originally in 1885, this old barque had in her hull timbers no less than thirty-four inches thick, so that she could withstand pressure from ice-floes which would have crushed any ordinary vessel like an egg-shell. Since, however, she was of only five hundred and twelve tons burthen it was obvious that she could not carry all that was needed for so large an expedition, including the great amount of fuel necessary. Byrd therefore chartered two other ships, the *Eleanor Bolling* and the whaler *C. A. Larsen*, to accompany her. Indeed, they towed her for nearly two thousand miles in order to economize her fuel. The *Eleanor Bolling* carried two of the three aeroplanes which Byrd had purchased, as well as seven thousand five hundred gallons of petrol.

The *City of New York* reached the Great Ice Barrier which fronts the whole of the Antarctic continent on Christmas Day, 1928, and at once her crew set about finding a spot where it would be possible to land. The one chosen was in the Bay of Whales, an inlet in the Ross Sea, which is almost directly south from New Zealand.

Since the expedition was to make its home on the ice for at least a year a permanent camp was to be established, and this had to be some way inland. Huge masses of ice are constantly breaking away from the Barrier itself, so obviously it would be most dangerous to camp too near the verge. The spot chosen was seven and a half miles inland; then the work of unloading the ship began.

Although Christmas is midsummer at the South Pole, the weather was anything but summer-like. Storms were frequent,

and the commander was obliged to order the men who handled the dog-teams hauling the various articles from ship to camp always to carry their sleeping-bags, in case they were overtaken by a blizzard. And just as the Highland roads in Scotland are marked by tall white posts, so the trail from shore to camp was marked by poles carrying orange-coloured flags. Orange, we may mention, is the colour which shows up best against snow.

The men made two trips daily, thirty miles in all, and within a month had hauled no fewer than five hundred and fifty tons of cargo from the ship to the base. This in spite of the fact that the snow was often soft and that men and sledges sometimes broke through.

By degrees a regular village sprang up, which was called Little America. Commander Byrd had thought out everything, and the huts were lighted by electricity and warmed with paraffin stoves. The wireless outfit was wonderful. There were twenty-two transmitters and twenty-eight receivers, while four radio operators were among the party. In this way the expedition was in constant touch with civilization, and on more than one occasion messages were received from a distance of more than eleven thousand miles.

The *Eleanor Bolling* was due with fresh supplies from New Zealand, and Commander Byrd went out one day in a small motor-boat to search for a good landing-place. He had with him Sverze, the first mate, and Strom, the pilot, also Paul Siple and John Suttén. They found what they were looking for, and had turned back, when the feathery spout of a whale was seen ahead. Another spout rushed up into the cold, still air, and the black fin of a killer whale showed above the surface.

The killer whale is without doubt the most savagely vicious of all denizens of the sea. Mr. Ponting in his book on the polar expedition of Captain Scott has described how he was attacked by killer whales. He was on the ice at the time of the attack, but the killers, butting up under the floe, smashed it to pieces, and stuck their heads through the cracks in furious efforts to seize their victims. Ponting only escaped by leaping desperately from one broken cake of ice to another, and so at last reaching floe-ice too thick for the ugly monsters to tackle.

Byrd and his crew in the motor-boat felt a trifle uneasy. There were a number of the killers about, and it was evidently useless to try to avoid the brutes by going outside them. Byrd therefore gave orders to keep a course close by the ice, so that if attacked



they would be able to jump on to the floe. At the same time he loaded his revolver, a heavy "forty-five."

Suddenly the water broke, and out rolled three killers close behind the boat. As they went under again the boat was headed at full speed for the edge of the floe, and one man scrambled out with a rope and held the boat for the rest. All jumped out, and waited anxiously for what would happen next. But the killers had dived right under the ice and missed the boat, and after a while the party were able to get back in safety to the ship.

Later they shot two of these tigers of the sea, and in each case the rest of the pack set upon their wounded companions and tore them savagely to pieces.

The last article to be brought from the ship to Little America was the aeroplane. She was a large monoplane capable of one hundred and forty miles an hour, and named the *Stars and Stripes*. The task of getting the enormous crate which held her over the ship's side and on to the ice was a very tricky one, but was performed without any accident.

This was the first aeroplane to be landed in Antarctica, and great was the excitement when she arrived at the base. No time was lost in putting her together, but so intense was the cold that it was found most difficult to start her. The motor had to be heated by a torch placed under a fireproof covering, and warmed oil had to be put into the tank.

The machine lifted off the prepared ice-run on January 15, and within a very few minutes Byrd was looking down on a part of the world never before seen by man. The plane carried sleeping-bags, a sledge, and food in case of accident, and at first it almost looked as if these things might be necessary, for icicles formed on the ailerons. Happily the weight of ice was not too great, and the machine returned in safety. She carried wireless, and during her flight over the wide ice-fields was actually in communication with New York, nine thousand two hundred miles away.

The *Eleanor Bolling* arrived, and was berthed under the ice-edge to be unloaded. The work was going on steadily when there was a crack like a cannon-shot, and a vast mass of ice, dropping from the barrier, fell upon the ship. Horror was on every face, for it looked as though she would turn turtle under the shock. Several of her crew were flung into the freezing sea, but boats were launched with all speed from the *City of New York* and Byrd himself sprang into the water to rescue his companions. So prompt was help that not a single life was lost.

The ship righted herself, the masses of ice slipped away, and, barring a certain amount of damage to the superstructure of the ship, no other harm was done by an accident which might very well have wrecked the whole expedition.

The *Eleanor Bolling* had brought two more planes, so many flights were undertaken, and by degrees an area of forty thousand square miles was mapped out by camera from the air. A range of mountains, eight thousand to ten thousand feet high, was charted, and the new territory was named Marie Byrd Land, after Admiral Byrd's wife. The coast-line, too, was charted.

By the middle of February winter was beginning to close in. The *Eleanor Bolling* had already left, and now it was time for the *City of New York* to go. Otherwise she would have been frozen up. On February 22 she sailed north, and the men, wistfully watching her masts disappear over the horizon, knew that they were marooned for a year.

The *Virginia*, the second of the planes, set out to form a base in the chain of newly found mountains named the Rockefeller Range. Caught in a blizzard of snow, she crashed, and was wrecked. Byrd was not with the party, but when the *Virginia* failed to return he and two of his men, Hansen and Smith, set out in a second plane to search for their companions.

It grew dark, the weather was very bad, and they had almost given up hope, when, far beneath, they caught sight of a spark of light, and, heading for the spot, saw the *Virginia* lying wrecked upon the snow. They made a perfect landing, and were intensely relieved to find the crew of the wrecked plane safe and unhurt. Their sleeping bags had saved them from frost-bite, and they came safely back to Little America.

That accident finished flying for the season, and the other two planes were covered up in houses built, like Eskimo igloos, of blocks of frozen snow.

Snow fell so heavily that the base was buried. Tunnels were cut under the snow from hut to hut, so that the men need not expose themselves to the frost. The mercury had dropped to forty-seven degrees below zero—that is, seventy-nine degrees of frost.

Now the party had to face four months of total darkness, furious storms, and intense cold. Yet, thanks to the foresight of their commander, no party of Arctic explorers were ever better off. They had plenty of good food, games of all kinds, and were able to listen to wireless music brought thousands of miles over

icy seas by their wonderful wireless installation. The braver spirits went out for walks, but this was risky in a temperature varying from forty to sixty-four below zero. They had to wear masks to keep their faces from frost-bite.

They were not idle, for they had scientific and meteorological observations to make and record, and they were making preparations too for the flight to the Pole and for the big trip afoot which was to be made by the geological party.

The wireless was always interesting; on July 3 they listened to accounts of New York sweltering in a temperature of ninety-eight degrees in the shade, while their own thermometer measured ninety-six degrees of frost.

On August 24 the sun was visible for the first time for four months, but the cold was still intense, and it was not until October that the two remaining aeroplanes, the *Stars and Stripes* and the *Floyd Bennett*, could be dug out of their ice-houses.

Little America was seven hundred and ninety-two miles from the South Geographical Pole, but it was not the distance that troubled her pilots; it was the fact that the flight involved a climb over a mountain range at least fourteen thousand feet high. With the big load of petrol they had to carry they knew that this was going to be a struggle.

The *Floyd Bennett*, the plane for the big flight, was an all-metal, tri-motored Ford monoplane. Empty, she weighed six thousand pounds, but with her full load no less than seven tons. It was too much to expect her to do the whole trip there and back at one flight, so the other plane was sent out to make a base at the foot of Mount Nansen. Two hundred miles out this plane passed over the geological party toiling like ants across the mighty waste of ice, and signalled to them. The party landed and made their base, storing three hundred and fifty pounds of food, petrol, oil, etc. It was so bitterly cold that they dared not stop the engines while they unloaded. Had they not kept them running they would have frozen up—that is, the oil would have solidified.

All being ready, Byrd and his party waited only for good weather to make a start. On November 28 a wireless report was received from the geological party, who were now three hundred and fifty miles south of the base camp, that conditions were good and the weather was as near "set fair" as Antarctic weather ever is, so the start was made.

Again the geologists had the excitement of seeing the big plane

pass over their heads, and Byrd, flying low, dropped by parachute a big parcel containing letters, wireless messages from home, cigarettes, and other small matters which must have been exceedingly welcome to the foot-sloggers.

The *Floyd Bennett* was named after Byrd's friend of that name, who had accompanied Byrd on his Arctic flight, but had since passed from this life. In the plane Byrd carried a small stone from Bennett's grave, which he intended to drop as near as possible to the South Pole itself.

As they flew onward they emptied petrol from five gallon cans into the tank and threw away the cans, for as they were climbing all the time toward the vast mountain rampart which guards the Pole every pound of weight counted. The lofty range loomed ahead, but before they reached its crest disaster threatened. The ailerons failed to have any effect. The plane still flew powerfully forward, but refused to rise. She had reached her "ceiling."

Something had to be done, and quickly. Either food, equipment, or petrol had to be sacrificed: a terrible choice. If petrol were jettisoned there might not be enough to take them back; if food, then a forced landing would mean starvation; as for equipment, as Byrd said afterward, he believed his men would rather go overboard than lose their precious instruments.

The choice, then, was food, and a bag went over. The plane responded and rose, but not enough to clear the vast ridge. Another bag was jettisoned. They had sacrificed three hundred pounds' weight of food, sufficient, that, is to last the four men for six weeks. Now if the plane came to grief disaster was certain.

The ridge loomed nearer. They were barely five hundred feet up. Would she clear it, for if not the next thing to go must be the precious petrol. Byrd says that the next few minutes were the longest he had ever spent. The plane was over the pass with peaks on either side; there was dead silence for a minute, then a shout of joy arose as her crew saw the ground falling away before them. Now there were no more mountains ahead, merely a level tableland reaching all the way to the Pole.

All the way McKinley, the photographer, had been using his aero-camera, taking pictures of every mile. There is no other such pictorial record in existence. And so they flew steadily on. Byrd was busy with his instruments. A little later he wirelessed to his base: "My calculations show that we have reached the vicinity of the South Pole. Flying high for survey. Soon turn north."

In the floor of the cabin was a trap-door; this was opened, and through it was dropped an American flag weighted with the stone from Floyd Bennett's grave. The men saluted the flag and the spirit of their gallant comrade. Above the plane they flew the Union Jack in memory of the gallant Scott, who lost his life to reach the spot beneath them.

Then the order was given to turn back. Lightened of so much petrol and favoured with fair weather, the plane recrossed the mountains without trouble, and, flying at tremendous speed, made straight back for Little America. She arrived there safely, having completed the entire journey in the amazingly short time of fifteen hours fifty-one minutes.

We have said that Admiral Byrd is a great organizer. His best testimonial is the fact that his flight to the South Pole and all his explorations in Antarctica were completed without the loss of a single life.

# PILGRIMS WHO PRAYED IN A BURNING SHIP

By  
JOHN ASHWELL

*There have been many terrible tragedies in the history of the sea, but one of the most horrible in recent years has passed almost unnoticed. This was when S.S. "Asia," a French liner carrying Moslem pilgrims, caught fire in Jedda Harbour on May 21, 1930. When rescue work was ended and a roll call had been answered, one hundred and twelve of the one thousand five hundred passengers had failed to reply to their names. All had perished in the flames or had been drowned in trying to escape. This is the story of Captain Marchandean, captain of the ship, who, true to seafaring tradition, refused to leave the vessel until rescue work had been completed.*

At eight o'clock in the evening Captain Marchandean, captain of the French liner, S.S. *Asia*, was resting in his cabin. His ship was due to sail early next morning, and he wanted to snatch a few hours sleep before going up on to the bridge.

Marchandean, a typical French seaman, who had had thirty-three years at sea, was carrying one thousand five hundred Moslems from Jedda to southern Red Sea ports, finishing the voyage at Jibuti in French Somaliland. His passengers—Arabs and Somalis—had been embarking throughout the afternoon, clambering on board loaded with coffee-pots, suitcases and tin boxes containing nearly all their worldly possessions. Now his officers reported that they had settled themselves, packed closely together in the small 5,890-ton vessel.

Captain Marchandean had ceased to be excited by these Moslem pilgrims. There had been a time when he found their journey rather romantic, but years spent in transporting them had dulled that sense of romance.

Every year he brought his ship down to the Red Sea to collect his quota of Moslems and take them to Jedda. He had seen them come on board, men and women who had hoarded their miserable savings for years in preparation for the day when they would make

the journey to Mecca, their holy city, and would return to their homes with the coveted title of *Hadji*—or holy pilgrim.

He had seen them hoarded on tramp steamers and small liners, with the poorer passengers quartered on deck, to be broiled by the hot sun during the day and to be swept by cold sea winds at night. Yet they endured silently until their vessel entered the harbour of Jedda. Then he had watched them disembarking and plodding into the city, where they were taken in hand by Arab guides who piloted them to Mecca. Then, when the pilgrimage was over, they had come trailing back on the forty-six miles journey to Jedda, the wealthier pilgrims travelling on camels or on asses, while the poor tramped patiently along the hot caravan trails, back to the ships which were to take them home. As he watched them, their eyes burning with the happiness of a dream fulfilled, Marchandeau had often felt the desire to visit Mecca to see for himself. But he knew that this holy city was open only to the Moslems, and was forbidden to anyone not of their faith.

This year, with his crew of eighty-six, Marchandeau had left Marseilles on April 5, to play his part in the pilgrim traffic. They had brought their one thousand five hundred passengers on the nine hundred miles journey from Jibuti to Jedda, and had waited impatiently in the heavy heat of the Red Sea for the pilgrims to return. Now that they were aboard, they had only to make the return journey, and then they would be on their way home to Marseilles. Both captain and crew were longing for that day.

While Marchandeau rested in his cabin on the evening of May 21, 1930, his wireless operator was exchanging messages with another pilgrim ship in the harbour. The latter had tapped out a message, "Any news?"

The wireless operator of the *Asia* replied: "Nothing to report, thanks. Good night."

Less than five minutes later, one of the crew was pounding on Captain Marchandeau's cabin door. "Fire has broken out in one of the second-class cabins, sir. It is spreading rapidly."

With an exclamation of dismay, Marchandeau put on his jacket and went up on to the bridge. His first officer was waiting, and reported briefly that the fire was out of control and was sweeping the ship.

Looking down on the decks, the captain saw smoke pouring out of an after companionway. Already, too, his passengers were beginning to panic. Most of them had never been to sea before this pilgrimage, and had half-expected in the beginning that this

new adventure might be a dangerous one. The uneventfulness of the outward journey had seemingly calmed them, but now their worst fears were justified. They had herded together on the deck, and were chattering fearfully among themselves, casting nervous glances at the clouds of smoke which were rising into the skies.

"We shall have to send them ashore in lifeboats," said Marchandeau. Then he gasped in horror as he saw that those on the port side were blazing. It was impossible to launch them.

He reached out for a piece of paper and pencil, and scrawled a message. *Fire has broken out. One thousand five hundred pilgrims and eighty-six crew aboard. Difficult to launch lifeboats. I beg all ships within radius to send their boats to my help.*

"Tell the wireless operator to send out that message," he ordered. "There are enough ships around us to take off the passengers," he added to his first officer. "There should be no danger."

He looked out through his glasses at the six other ships lying in the harbour, four British and two French. *Asia* was about a mile out from shore, ready to sail on the morning tide, and the others were about half a mile away. Despite the darkness that was approaching, he could see men running about on the decks as they prepared to launch their lifeboats. If only he could keep the flames under control until help arrived, at least there would be no loss of life.

Meanwhile, under his orders, the crew were making heroic efforts to cope with the flames. He saw some of them dragging a hose-pipe towards the flames which were sweeping the deck. Sea-water spluttered out of the nozzle, but it had no effect. The flames swept on, and the hose fell from the firemen's hands. They ran back, shielding their faces with their arms from the fierce heat.

Marchandeau had given orders, too, for the lifeboats on the starboard side to be lowered. He saw the first boat drop down to the deck level, and the terror-stricken Arabs make a rush for it. "Women and children first," cried the crew, but no one cared. Men and women fought one another to get into the boat, and those who were scrambling over the side were pulled back by those behind them.

"Stand back there," shouted Marchandeau through his megaphone. "That boat is already crowded." The pilgrims were too frightened to pay any attention to orders, but the crew, hearing his shouts, began using their fists to keep the surging mass away from the boat.



For a moment the pilgrims hesitated, as several men reeled back from the heavy blows. Then fear made them push forward again, and the handful of men were incapable of keeping them back. About eighty men and women filled the boat, until there was not room for even a single extra person.

Marchandean thought quickly. With that heavy load, the boat would probably capsize before it reached the water. Yet it was obviously impossible to persuade any of the wretched passengers to leave it. Already they were getting impatient because the boat had not been lowered, and several were slashing at the ropes with their knives.

"Lower the lifeboat!" he shouted.

It began to move slowly on its journey downwards, the passengers meanwhile shouting and screaming with fright. Then, when it was half-way down the ship's side, the lifeboat suddenly lurched crazily. The occupants were flung out into the sea, while the boat dangled helplessly in mid-air.

There were loud screams as heads bobbed up and down in the sea. Few of them could swim and, to add to the horror, the sea was infested with sharks. From the bridge, Marchandean could see these monsters swimming among the drowning people; there would be a sudden struggle, a scream, and then another head would disappear under water.

Lifeboats from the other ships were now cruising round the *Asia*, picking up those who had survived the accident and the sharks. When they were lifted aboard, many were found to have broken limbs, injuries that were caused when the mass of people were thrown against each other as they fell out of the lifeboat.

Meanwhile, Marchandean had given orders for more lifeboats to be lowered. "See that these do not get overcrowded," he ordered. The handful of sailors tried loyally to carry out his instructions, but it was useless. With the second boat, there was a repetition of the earlier scenes. One of the crew reported afterwards that, in the mêlée, he saw an Arab draw a knife and plunge it into the back of a man who was scrambling into the boat. With a moan, the man fell back; but as the murderer tried to take his place, two other Arabs pulled him back. There was a scuffle, and others joined in.

The murderer managed to free himself from his assailants, and climbed on to the deck rail. But someone clutched his leg, and with a yell of terror he disappeared overboard.

While the fighting was going on, others had crowded into the

lifeboat, until it was as crowded as its predecessor. And when an attempt was made to lower it, exactly the same tragedy occurred. The occupants were pitched into the sea; and again there was a race aboard the cruising lifeboats to reach the wretched men and women before they drowned or were claimed by the sharks.

Marchandean had now given up all hope of saving his vessel, and with the lifeboats on the port side ablaze, it was obviously impossible to get all the passengers away without the help of the boats and dhows which were now gathering round the blazing ship. As he looked down at the mass of pilgrims, jostling each other, shouting, some plunging overboard in mad terror, he realized that panic was going to make it difficult to take them off safely. If, however, he were to run his ship aground, it would make rescue work much easier. It might mean the saving of hundreds of lives.

He called down to the engine room. There were only a few men left there; among them was the chief engineer. To him, Marchandean gave orders for the engines to be started. "I want every ounce of steam," he added.

After a pause, the engines began to throb. Marchandean, watching anxiously, saw the lifeboats and dhows move quickly out of the way as he steered his ship slowly towards the shore. But she did not travel far. The captain heard a sudden tearing, crashing sound and the ship shivered. Peering into the dusk, he saw that she had clawed her way up a reef and was remaining there.

Wearily, he turned to the speaking-tube and explained what had happened to the engineer. "Bring your men up on deck. They can do no more."

More lifeboats had now arrived on the scene from the other ships, and scores of Arab seamen had put out from Jedda in their dhows, those single sail vessels which they use for pearling and for sailing in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. They had grouped themselves round the *Asia* as she perched drunkenly on the reef, lighting the dark skies with her terrible glow.

The heat on the decks had now become almost unbearable. The stern was a mass of flames, and the fire was sweeping forwards at an alarming speed. The crew had stripped to the waist as they strode among the pilgrims, urging them to climb down the ropes which had been slung aboard from the rescue vessels. But the pilgrims hung back, so terrified that they had even lost the nerve to save themselves.

A British officer in one of the lifeboats cupped his hands, and shouted up to Marchandau. "Keep them calm, and we can get them away safely. But, for God's sake, make them get down those ropes."

Marchandau nodded. He snapped a few orders, and the crew redoubled their efforts to make the pilgrims realize that this was their one chance of escape.

A few moved forward to the ropes. Nervously, they swung over the side and clambered down. Willing hands were stretched out to grasp them, and they were lifted into the boats.

Seeing that others were safe, there was a rush to get to the ropes. The pilgrims began to hurl their belongings into the boats beneath. Coffee-pots, suitcases and tin boxes were showered upon the rescuers. Then men and women began to clamber down the ropes into the boats.

The masts of the dhows, which were bumping against the side of the *Asia*, began to catch alight. One or two sheered off.

Now the heat was becoming more intense, and many did not wait to climb down the ropes. They leapt from the doomed ship, hoping to be picked up. By the hundreds they jumped and were dragged into the lifeboats. Soon these were loaded to the gunwales and had to return to their ships or risk being sunk.

Some of the Moslems, however, were unperturbed by the panic. Despite the fury that raged around them, they had lined themselves up in the Moslem fashion for night prayers. Many had dressed themselves in the gorgeous robes of the *hadji*, the white garments and green turban only permitted to those who have made the holy pilgrimage to Mecca.

Their prayer rugs were stretched before them and they fell on their knees with the words of the Koran on their lips, apparently indifferent to the death that was creeping towards them.

"Allah is great."

"There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet."

"Allah is merciful."

Members of the crew moved among them, urging them to save themselves. "*Imsh'allah*. It is fate," they intoned. Some continued to pray; others folded up their prayer rugs and moved to the ropes which swayed over the side.

When talking of the disaster afterwards, Marchandau admitted that this fatalism was the most heroic incident he saw. But at the time he was too busy directing the rescue work. There were many acts of bravery that night which have gone unrecorded, and most

of them were due to the calmness which Marchandau inspired among his crew by his coolness. Although the flames were now raging close to the bridge, he continued to encourage his men, and refused to think of his own safety.

While this rescue work was in progress, several Arabs in the dhows made themselves conspicuous by their bravery. Among them was a man named Abdul Malik. He arrived on the scene when the pilgrims were frenzied with fear and, with the swaying mast bumping against the blazing sides of the *Asia*, he began his rescue work.

Many of the pilgrims were too frightened to jump into the dhow, so he himself clambered aboard the liner. Again and again he descended with women, children and helpless old men. When his dhow was so laden that the sea began to lap over the sides, he hoisted his sail and set off for the nearest ship in the harbour.

The pilgrims were taken aboard, and then Abdul Malik sailed back to the *Asia*. Three times he brought away a heavy batch of passengers. He must have saved more than one hundred and fifty lives before he made his fourth trip to the blazing liner.

As he worked, the mast suddenly caught fire. His men hacked it down, while Abdul Malik continued to lower the pilgrims into the dhow. Then, while trying to rescue an old man, the deck beneath him cracked asunder. There was a yell and, with the old man, he fell into the raging flames.

Rescue work continued. Members of the crew still worked feverishly. There were women and children who would not save themselves, and the French sailors carried them down the ropes, handing them to the rescuers and then returning to their ship.

At last, they were able to report to the captain that their work was complete. By now it was only a question of minutes before it would be impossible for any human being to live in that inferno of flames and smoke.

Marchandau raised the megaphone to his lips for the last time. "Thank you, men," he boomed. "Your work is done. Now save yourselves. Every man for himself."

There was a rush for the ropes. Man after man climbed quickly down into the waiting lifeboats. Others flung themselves overboard, risking the sharks, and swam to the nearest launch. When Vignali, the chief engineer, threw himself overboard, he had to swim with arms that were skinned by burns.

Marchandau was now alone on the bridge. He glanced at his watch and saw that it was just after midnight. Four hours had

passed since he had had the first warning that his ship was ablaze. In that time, he had seen some wonderful acts of heroism, he had seen men burning alive and others devoured by sharks. His work was complete. He had remained loyal to the traditions of the sea, and had stayed aboard his ship until his passengers were saved. Now he would save himself.

He picked up his ship's papers and fought his way down from the bridge. The smoke blinded him and the heat blistered his hands, but he plunged on. Reaching the side, he sprang overboard, his burned hands still clutching the papers.

He was picked up by a lifeboat from the British ship *Boulac*. As the British sailors rowed back towards their ship, he gazed back at his own vessel. It was now a red glow from the stern almost to the bows, and flames were shooting up high into the sky. With heavy heart he turned his back upon it. Soon he was aboard the *Boulac*, and was thanking the captain and crew for their superb efforts to save his passengers.

By now the lifeboats and dhows had left the *Asia* to her fate and were carrying the survivors to other ships or back to the shore. Only one or two boats still cruised round, looking for men who might be swimming in the shark-infested sea.

Suddenly they heard loud screams from aboard the *Asia*. A lifeboat from the British ship *Arabistan*, commanded by two young officers, approached the liner to make investigations. There they found a group of Arabs huddled in the bows and screaming for help.

The young officers called out to them to jump into the sea, but the Arabs were either afraid or did not understand. They continued to shout a stream of Arabic at the rescuers. The two Englishmen debated among themselves and finally gave orders for the lifeboat to be taken right up to the side of the *Asia*. Then they seized a hanging rope and slowly clambered aboard.

The heat and the smoke were almost unbearable, but they staggered to the Arabs. "Jump overboard," they ordered again. Still the Arabs refused.

"We had better pass them into the boat," suggested one.

One by one the Arabs were passed down the rope and were dragged into the waiting lifeboat. Then the young British officers followed, the last men to leave the burning ship.

The lifeboat pushed off and returned to the *Arabistan*, and the *Asia* was left to her fate.

When the sun rose a few hours later, the ship was still blazing.

Heavy clouds of smoke rolled over the seas where scores of men and women had been drowned or burned alive. It was not until two or three days later that the fire burned itself out, leaving a charred wreck perched drunkenly on the reef.

Meanwhile all the survivors had been landed at Jedda and a roll call was held. Arab policemen called out the names from the passenger lists, and made a pencilled note each time that there was no answer. When the roll call was ended, one hundred and twelve names had been pencilled out. All the eighty-six members of the crew had been saved.

Then one of the most dramatic incidents of those hours of terror was suddenly revealed by some of the Arab survivors.

When the fire was at its height, fifty men and women on the lower deck had tried to escape to the upper deck by climbing an iron ladder. But the terrible heat drove them back. Smoke swirled round them, making them gasp for breath. They knew that nothing could save them. They were doomed to die in this ship, to be burned alive by the terrible flames.

They were not afraid of death, for they were of the East, where men pray for spiritual immortality and not for life. So, with superb fatalism, they drew their knives and cut their throats rather than be burned to death. And probably they died with a prayer to Allah on their lips.

Their bodies, piled up at the foot of the companionway, caused another tragedy. Many of the pilgrims had gathered in the dining saloon and, with their faces turned to Mecca, were praying. When at last the heat made them think of escape, they found that the bodies of the suicides blocked the way to freedom.

Feverishly, they worked to pull down the barricade of bodies. But the smoke choked them as they worked and, gasping for breath, they died, adding to the pile of bodies. Only one or two were able to fight their way through and, with their bodies badly burned, escaped in the waiting lifeboats.

The governor of Jedda held an inquiry into the fire, and put some searching questions to Captain Marchandau and his crew. But no one could say how the fire had started, and the inquiry closed with a tribute to the brave men who had worked so hard and heroically to save the pilgrims.

A few days later, the survivors left for their homes in another ship, to spread the story of those hours of horror.

Captain Marchandau and his crew returned to Marseilles in another French liner. And the captain's final words were: "In

all my thirty-three years at sea I have never known such a terrible tragedy. But thank God that, if the fire had to take place at all, it should have occurred so near to land and to willing helpers. If it had been delayed for a few hours until we were out at sea, I doubt if more than a handful of the one thousand five hundred passengers or eighty-six crew would have lived to tell the tale."

Today the story of the *Asia* is just a memory at Jedda, where superstitious Arabs insist that at night they have seen a phantom ship out in the roadsteads. They have watched, so they say, the ghosts of frenzied pilgrims jumping overboard, and have watched scores kneeling on the decks, praying to Allah. And at last, as the ship faded from sight, they have heard the screams of the dying pilgrims.

# ADVENTURE IN THE HIMALAYAS

By  
ERIC SHIPTON

ON August 27 we began hurried preparations for our second Nanda Devi venture. We had, by good fortune and the experience of those who had gone before us, met with far more success than we had deserved in the first penetration of the basin. But, greatly interested as we were in the Badrinath Kedarnath topography, the major task of exploring the Nanda Devi Basin was yet unfinished.

Now that the monsoon had abated somewhat there was no time to waste and Angtharkay was despatched with instructions to recruit fifteen men from the Mana Valley and to return with them as soon as possible. Meanwhile we were busy working out our ration lists, collecting food, packing up and planning our last little campaign.

Passang's foot was by no means healed, and I expressed some doubt as to whether we would be able to take him with us. But the mere suggestion that he should be left behind hurt him so desperately that I had not the heart to insist and weakly agreed that, as it was two weeks since the accident and he was no longer feeling pain, he could come along.

The rest of the party, although there was much work to be done, were glad enough of the respite from marching, and a newly arrived batch of letters and papers provided Tilman and myself with a certain amount of recreation, although through these we learnt for the first time and with profound sadness of the terrible disaster which had overtaken the German expedition to Nanga Parbat early in July, when four Europeans had perished together with six of our gallant Sherpa comrades from the 1933 Everest expedition. We thought it wiser to keep this news from our three men, and it was an unpleasant ordeal when, some six weeks later, we broke it to them, for nowhere can be found a more warm-hearted friendship than amongst these great little men of the Himalayas.

Late on the night of August 29, Angtharkay arrived with as tough a squad of men as we could have wished for, amongst whom I recognized several whose acquaintance I had made on



the Kamet expedition in 1931. He brought, too, kind messages of congratulation from His Holiness the Rawal and other of our friends in Badrinath. We were particularly gratified to receive a message from "Master" Ram Serikh Singh who, on hearing of Angtharkay's arrival had rushed down from his camp in the lovely valley below Nilkanta to hear our news. Later I had the pleasure of receiving a long and charming letter from him in the course of which he says: "... When you and Tilman Sahib started from Badrinath to explore the Badri-Kedar snowy ranges the rains began to fall, and they were not only heavy but record rains. I have never experienced such heavy and continuous rain for the several years of my residence in this part of the Himalayas. I was expecting you to return without success. When nothing was heard of you I expected that both you and your porters must have perished in the snow. They were anxious days for me. But when I received your letter in my camp from Joshimath with the news of your unique success I hurried down to Badrinath to send a message of my heartfelt congratulations to you and Tilman Sahib. . . ."

We managed to get away just before noon the following day. The weather was bad and we experienced heavy rain as we marched once more up the Dhaoli Valley. After our recent experiences we were anxious about our food supply getting wet. As usual it consisted mainly of flour in the form either of *ata* or *satu*. At Tapoban, where we spent that night, we came across a thermal spring. Near its source the water was so hot that one could hardly bear to immerse one's hand. The Sherpas have very great faith in the benefits to be derived from these springs and even Passang was persuaded, contrary to his Tibetan custom, to have a bath.

Our next day's march took us to Lata, where we billeted in an ancient barn, innocent of roof. We hoped that we would now be able to obtain some food from the inhabitants so as not to have to broach our new stores until we were well on our way; however, as usual, nothing very substantial was forthcoming. Two cucumbers and some potatoes were brought to us by an old woman. When we asked her how much she wanted for them she burst into tears and replied that as her child had recently died she would rather that we did not pay her. We failed to see the connection, and could not induce her to take any money. However, a gift of matches so delighted her that she seemed to forget her late bereavement. An old man actually brought three eggs for which he demanded eight annas (9d.) each. We told him that we could

not possibly pay such a ridiculous price, but when he started to go away with the eggs I panicked and gave him the money without further discussion. At that moment an egg seemed an almost priceless luxury.

We were told that at Tolma rice was obtainable, and Kusang volunteered to start very early next morning and go with one of the Mana men to purchase the rice and catch up the rest of us in the evening by taking a short cut from Tolma. We agreed to buy the rice on condition that there were no complaints later about the weight of the loads.

The weather was fine during the morning and we had a most pleasant march along a well-defined path amongst the tall sombre pines of the forest through which we had raced exactly two months before. Now we were not spurred on by the pangs of hunger and we were going uphill instead of down; so we had time to linger in the shady glades of the lovely, open forest. It was a long pull up however, as Lata was under seven thousand five hundred feet and the little alp of Lata Kharak which we were making for was nearly thirteen thousand feet.

We pitched camp at the upper limits of the forest just in time to bundle the loads of food inside the tents as a heavy rain storm burst upon us. But it did not last long, and after it had cleared away we collected great masses of rhododendron firewood, and were soon sitting round blazing fires, I for my part lost in wonder at the sight of the ranges across the valley, flooded in that unbelievable blue light which occasionally follows a heavy evening shower in the hills. From far down in the forest there came a faint shout which was at once answered by the full strength of the party, after which the job of guiding the wanderers was taken in turn and shrill whistles broke the silence of the forest at intervals of a minute or so. Kusang and his companion eventually turned up long after dark and after what must have been a very hard day. They had secured a maund (eighty pounds) of rice, the arrival of which was greeted with great jubilation.

The rain came on again and continued to fall throughout the night, with the result that we had some difficulty in getting the men started next morning and did not leave before 9 o'clock. By then the rain had stopped but a damp mist enveloped the mountain side and a cold wind beat in our faces. This seemed to have a good effect on the coolies, who displayed a remarkable turn of speed. We managed to hit off the sheep-track which led us once again over the scene of the exhausting labours of our first visit

in May. It was interesting to pick out old landmarks—here a ridge to reach which had cost us half a day of weary flogging; there a gully into which we had floundered up to our armpits. Now we were swinging along a well-defined path at the rate of miles an hour. We passed a short way above our old bivouac place, and pointed out to the Bhotias the little platform on which we had passed the night; how different it looked from that little island of rock which we remembered so well!

When still in thick mist we reached the Durashi Pass, the Sherpas, led by Kusang, insisted on building an enormous cairn for old times sake. On this they deposited various tattered garments which had hitherto clung miraculously to their bodies. Passang sacrificed his hat in order to create a huge joke by placing it on top of the edifice and leaving it there. I think he would have abandoned his boots if he had thought that it would make a better jest!

The Bhotias were mightily impressed by the sheep track which ran from here across the face of the cliffs to Durashi, as indeed anyone must be who sees it for the first time. We found some juniper growing in some of the steep gullies, and remembering the scarcity of firewood at Durashi we gathered great quantities so that the party resembled a small army of itinerant bushes. When we reached the alp, we found that a new lot of shepherds had taken the place of those we had met before. With their tall, strong frames, flowing hair and handsome, weather-beaten features, their appearance harmonized wonderfully with the prodigious splendour of their surroundings. They told us that the weather was becoming too cold for their flocks and that they were starting their retreat to the Dhaoli Valley on the following day. This retreat must have meant a long anxious job for them, as most of the new-born lambs were still too small to walk far, and there were hundreds of these little creatures to be carried over the difficult ground which led to the Durashi Pass. Indeed, it was difficult to imagine how they hoped to achieve the passage without a considerable loss. Their dogs were beautiful animals and had wonderful control over the sheep.

The morning of September 3 was gloriously fine and the view from the "Curtain" ridge appeared to make a deep impression on the Bhotias, who demanded a detailed explanation of the topography. They were very thrilled to see a distant view of their own mountains, the Badrinath and Kamet ranges, and started a heated debate amongst themselves as to the identity of certain

THE SHIP THAT BEAT THE BRITISH NAVY

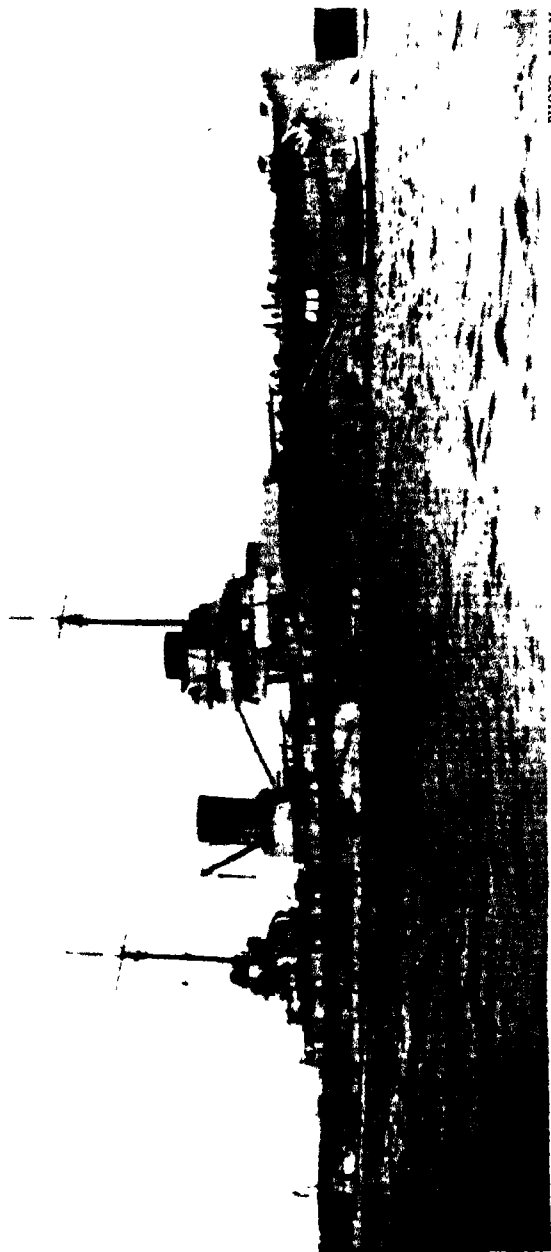


PHOTO. I. W. M.

THE "GOEBEN"

*The "Goeben" lying at anchor; this ship slipped away from the British ships  
at outbreak of war and found refuge in Turkish waters.*

## GALLIPOLI ADVENTURE

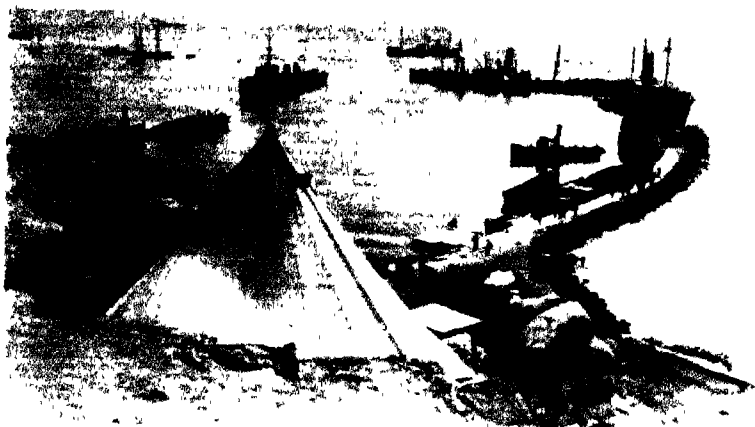


PHOTO: I.W.M.

### THE HISTORIC LANDING

(Top) The improvised harbour at Lancashire Landing, constructed of grounded ships. A British destroyer is seen in the harbour  
(Bottom) Turkish shells bursting near the S.S. "River Clyde"

features. But it was the sight of the graceful curves of their Blessed Goddess, Nanda Devi, as she stood framed between the dark walls of the upper gorge, which most excited their admiration. Several of them asked to be allowed to remain with us until we had finished our travels. What an extraordinarily nice lot they were! Always cheerful, they kept up a constant stream of good-humoured back-chat amongst themselves. They had not, of course, to undergo the hardships which the Dotials had suffered on our first journey, but before very long I came to have considerable respect for them as cragsmen, while their ever-ready wit and carefree laughter will remain as one of my pleasantest memories. They and the Sherpas came to be the very best of friends and I think there was a measure of genuine regret when the time came for the Bhotias to leave us. In camp in the forest beyond Dibrughita that evening they treated us to a concert of part songs which reminded me very much of those of the Welsh singers. After this one of their number produced a book which was apparently written in Nepali from which he read laboriously to the Sherpas.

During the next few days, as we traversed once more high up on the flanks of the Rishi Nala, we were able to appreciate the tremendous advantage of possessing local knowledge when travelling over difficult country. Across places which had previously cost us hours of anxious toil we were now able to lead our party safely in half the time. We found, however, a great many landslips had occurred in our absence, and that portions of the country were quite considerably altered. The rains must have been terrific. Small, steep side nalas, normally dry, and with very little collecting capacity, showed signs of having had as much as seven feet of water coming down them. We soon realized that the delay which had been caused by our experiences on the Satopanth Pass had been a blessing in disguise, for the Rishi Nala would have been no place to be in during such weather as we experienced in the forests of the Kedarnath valleys.

In order to preserve our rapidly disintegrating climbing boots, we wore rubber-soled shoes on this journey. They slipped about horribly on the damp grass and earth-covered rocks and made the traversing along narrow ledges a most unpleasant business. On one occasion Tilman did slip and for a moment I thought he was lost as he swayed on the brink of a dreadful drop.

From Dibrughita we followed the high level route by which we had returned in June. On September 5 we crossed the Rhamani, one thousand five hundred feet above its junction with

the Rishi. The stream was still in spate and we experienced some difficulty in getting across. Most of the Bhotias were very frightened of being swept away and left the task of getting the loads across mainly to two young "tigers," each of whom made some half a dozen crossings. One old man flatly refused to wade into the stream and was eventually carried across. Later it transpired that he was the "egg wallah" who had achieved a certain amount of fame on the Kamet expedition in 1931 by being washed away in a river in the Alaknanda Valley, only I had not recognized him. That evening we reached our old base camp at the entrance of the upper gorge. At one period during the monsoon everything had been flooded, though as we had walled in the belongings which we had left we found that they were still intact. There were several things which we did not require, but we soon came to wish that we had pitched them into the river as the Bhotias spent most of the night noisily dividing the spoil.

As we knew every inch of the route through the upper part of the gorge we decided to take ten of the Bhotias on with us, while the rest returned. Huge segments of the cliffs had broken away and it was very lucky for us that none of the vital sections of the route had been touched. One landslip might well have rendered the gorge impassable, though it is possible that it might have the reverse effect. The men climbed splendidly and on the evening of September 8 we pitched camp some miles up the main valley of the southern section of the basin. The Bhotias were astonished at the country. Such enormous areas of splendid pasturage and no one was able to get their flocks through to graze it! Passang said he would like to bring a few yaks through into the basin and live there in peace for the rest of his life!

Our camp was situated near the junction of the two main glaciers of the southern section, and promised to serve as a useful base for our work. Besides the exploration of the country to the south of Nanda Devi we meant to reconnoitre the southern ridges of the mountain to see if we could find a practicable route to the summit. But our chief ambition was to force our way out of the basin either to the south or to the east, for besides not wishing to return by the way we had come, Dr. Longstaff's words, "I can think of no more interesting or arduous task for a party composed of mountaineers than to follow up the great glaciers under the southern face of Nanda Devi and to cross the ridge on which I camped in 1905 into the Milam Valley," had fired our imaginations.

Our activities in the southern section were governed largely by this ambition. We had two possible alternatives. One was the col reached by Dr. Longstaff from the Lwanl Glacier on the Milam side, the other was the depression on the southern "rim" by which Mr. Rutledge and his guide Emile Rey had tried to gain access to the basin in 1932. Both these ways were likely to prove extremely difficult, but we were inclined to favour the former proposition as Longstaff had proved the practicability of the farther side of the Lwanl Col by climbing it from that direction, whereas from what we had heard of Rutledge's col it seemed very doubtful whether a reasonably safe route could be found down the southern face even if we succeeded in reaching its crest from the north.

It was mainly then with the object of obtaining a clear view of the unknown side of the Lwanl Col that on September 9 Tilman, Angharkay and I, after bidding farewell to the Bhotias, left camp heading in an easterly direction. We crossed the stream to the northern side of the valley by means of a snow bridge formed by a huge avalanche cone which had fallen from the cliffs of Nanda Devi. Presently, as we made our way along a moraine ledge under these cliffs, we were alarmed by the ominous whirr of falling stones accompanied by some shrill whistles, and, looking up, we saw a number of bharal high up among the crags above us. Never have I seen a more extraordinary display of rock climbing. The cliffs on which these animals were scrambling about looked from where we were to be utterly unclimbable; and yet here were four-legged creatures, young and old, running about on them as if they were horizontal instead of being almost vertical. Later we found out that owing to the inward dip of the rock strata the cliffs of this side of the mountain are not so difficult as they appear. Nevertheless, although I had often watched chamois in the Alps, I never before believed that these animals could move about on rock faces of such appalling steepness. I do not imagine that such agile climbers would be so careless as to knock stones down by accident and I strongly suspected that they were bombarding us purposely and probably enjoying a good laugh at our obvious alarm as the stones shattered themselves unpleasantly close to us.

Soon we got on to the big glacier flowing from the west under the southern face of Nanda Devi, and crossed it diagonally to its left bank, where we found a well-defined lateral moraine along which we could make good progress. We had gone for some miles before we rounded a corner and came in sight of the head of the glacier. There was a lot of cloud obscuring the peaks, but



after we had waited for half an hour or so we got a brief and distant view of the col. What we saw made us somewhat uneasy. From the col itself a steep ice or snow gully descended for about two thousand feet to the head of the glacier. If the gully consisted of good snow throughout its length it would not be difficult to climb it even if it were steep. But from where we stood it appeared to us to be composed of ice, particularly in its upper part. If this proved to be the case the task of cutting steps all the way up it, at the same time carrying loads of fifty pounds and being responsible for the safety of the Sherpas, who would be carrying at least seventy pounds, was one which neither of us was very keen to face; for on steep hard ice it is almost impossible to check a bad slip, while there is nothing easier than to make one. Moreover, several deep ruts in the gully and piles of *débris* below indicated that the route was swept by stone falls, while the rocks on either side of the gully did not appear to offer a satisfactory alternative. Our view, however, was too fleeting and too distant to be at all satisfactory or conclusive, but we saw enough to make us decide to examine the possibilities of the Sunderdhunga Col, as Ruttledge has named the depression on the southern "rim," before making a serious attempt to force a route up the grim precipices of the south-eastern wall.

Across the glacier from where we stood the great southern ridge of the main peak swept up into the drifting clouds at an appalling angle. I could not repress a shudder as I looked at its great glistening flanks and reflected that it had been our intention to look for a route up it. The lower section was hidden from view; but higher up the icy cliffs mounted without a break to support the majestic head of the virgin goddess, near ten thousand feet above us. I do not remember even remarking upon the apparent inaccessibility of the ridge, and I began to hope that we had proved the mountain to be unclimbable.

We returned to camp in the evening by way of the left bank of the glacier. The Bhotias had taken their departure and Passang and Kusang, having performed their numerous duties about the camp, were busily engaged as usual with their intricate coiffure. As they wore their hair long it was in constant need of attention, and long continued practice had taught them much which would make many a Paris hairdresser sit up and take notice. Sometimes a long and richly ornamental pigtail was allowed to hang down the back; sometimes it was wound round and round the head; on other occasions the hair was bunched coquettishly behind the ears.

A parting, when such was worn, was ruled with the most scrupulous accuracy. This evening I watched, fascinated, while Kusang (he did not know I was looking) ran a short stump of pencil up his nose and over his forehead to make sure that his parting ran exactly down the middle of his head. He repeated the process over and over again before he was satisfied, squinting the whole so grotesquely that I began to wonder if his smiling eyes would ever be the same again.

On the morning of September 10 we were greeted by a warm sun. As it was the first we had experienced for nearly two months we were tempted to bask in its kindly rays for some time before embarking upon the more serious work of the day. We decided to go up the great glacier which we had seen coming in from the south, at the head of which we suspected the Sunderdhunga Col must lie. We intended to camp near the head of the glacier, push a camp on to the crest of the col if that were possible and spend some days examining the ice-cliffs on the southern side in the hope of being able to find a way down. If we were successful we could return to continue our work in the basin for as long as our food lasted, in the comfortable knowledge that an escape over the rampart was possible. If we failed we would have to make an attempt on the great ice-gully leading up to Longstaff's Col. We started, carrying heavy loads, and were content to take things gently. By the time we got into a position which would command a view of the glacier the clouds had come up from the south and we could get no idea of the type of country for which we were making. The going was good on the dry ice of the glacier and we made steady progress, passing one or two remarkably fine specimens of "glacier tables." These somewhat surprising phenomena are caused by a large slab of rock falling on to the surface of the glacier and protecting the section of ice on which it has fallen from the rays of the sun, so that as the rest of the glacier melts the slab is left perched upon a pedestal of ice which it has protected. In the case of smaller rocks the process is reversed, the stone becoming heated by the sun and sinking into the ice instead of being left perched above it.

Soon after midday a bitter wind blew up from the south and sweeping across the glacier drove hail and sleet into our faces. This caused us to put on a spurt and before we camped we were a great deal farther up the glacier than we had expected to go that day. With difficulty we erected the tents and got the Primus going. The wind dropped towards sunset, and chancing to look

out of the tent I saw that the clouds had retreated down the valley leaving the peaks to the south clear. We saw that we were near the head of a very wide glacier-filled valley from which gentle ice-slopes rose to a broad saddle which we knew must be the Sunderdhunga Col. To its right was a massive ice-peak. This we concluded must be the triangulated peak, twenty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty feet, which is such a conspicuous landmark when seen from the south, and which is known by the Survey of India as East Trisul. The delicious purity of the summit snows, tinged as they were by delicate rays of the setting sun, filled me with desire for a closer acquaintance with the peak. Moreover, unlike most of the peaks in the vicinity, there was an obviously practicable route to the summit, and the prospect of a view from such an elevated point in this wonderland was irresistible. Arguments against the present plan were not difficult to find. The col was easily accessible from this side and in order to find out whether a descent on the south was practicable or not, one would have to go down several thousand feet of very difficult ice, and once one had done that, one would probably be disinclined to climb back again. So it was decided to cut out the reconnaissance, and make a full-dress attempt when our work in the basin had been completed.

We passed a very cold night and in consequence did not emerge from our tents until the sun was well up. Carrying one tent, bedding for three and food and fuel enough for three days, we started in the direction of the ice-peak. The weather remained fine all day, and as hour after hour we threaded our way laboriously through a badly-crevassed area which stretched for a long way up the mountain side, the heat and the glare from the newly fallen snow was almost unbearable. We aimed at getting our camp up to twenty thousand feet. Tilman had been feeling very unfit all day, and in the afternoon when we were at an altitude of about nineteen thousand he decided not to go any farther, and suggested, most unselfishly, that Kusang should stay up at the camp in his place and attempt the peak with Angharkay and myself, while he went down with Passang. I, too, was not feeling in very good form, and was suffering from a bad attack of that mysterious complaint loosely known as "glacier lassitude," so that I was glad when some five hundred feet higher up we came upon an excellent camping site in a crevasse.

With three of us crammed into a two-man tent, we settled down to a most uncomfortable night. Lack of space did not

permit independent movement and when one man wished to turn over the others had to turn too, in order that each should fit spoon-wise into the curves of the other. The Sherpas thought this a tremendous joke and as far as I could make out simply laughed themselves to sleep. I suppose I must lack much of that priceless gift—a sense of humour, for I could see in the situation very little to laugh at, with the consequence that I lay long into the night hiding my head and trying to decide which of my companions snored the loudest.

I roused them at 4 a.m. and after a great deal of struggling we contrived to melt ourselves a drink and wrap our shivering bodies in all the clothing which we could extract from the tangled mess inside the tent. Boots then had to be thawed out and forced after a frightful struggle on to feet which had apparently swollen overnight. Soon after 5 o'clock we issued reluctantly out into the bitter morning air.

It is curious how the Sherpas, when they have no loads to carry, seem to lose all power of controlled, rhythmic movement which is such a vital necessity in mountaineering and particularly at considerable altitudes. Their steps become jerky and impulsive, they rush along for a few minutes and then sit down, with the result that they soon become exhausted. All that their life of mountain wanderings has taught them about the best methods of walking uphill seems to be lost and they are like raw novices who are amongst the mountains for the first time in their lives.

Today this was very evident and before we had been climbing an hour the party was feeling very sorry for itself. Higher up, too, the snow conditions became bad and the work of chipping steps extremely laborious. We began to feel as we had felt at a considerably higher altitude on Everest the year before. We started off by going for an hour without a halt, then the hour was shortened to half an hour, half an hour to twenty minutes, twenty minutes to quarter of an hour, and at length we would subside gasping into the soft bed of snow after only ten minutes' struggle. But the morning was fine and as we lay there, we gazed out over a scene of ever-increasing grandeur until even the gigantic southern face of Nanda Devi became dwarfed by the mere extent of the panorama.

I can never hope to see a finer mountain view: the Badrinath peaks, Kamet, the Kosa group, Dunagiri and the great peaks of the northern part of the Nanda Devi Basin—all mountains amongst which we had been travelling for the past four months, served

merely as a foil to set off the stupendous ranges lying beyond Milam and across the borders of western Nepal. What a field of exploration lay there—the heritage of some future generation.

Only one frame of mind is possible when working one's way up bad snow at high altitudes. One must shut out from one's mind all but the immediate task of making the next step. To start fretting about the slowness of one's progress or about the time it is going to take to reach the goal would render the whole business unbearable. On a larger scale, this frame of mind, the firm concentration on immediate necessities, made possible those terrible months of sledging through the blizzards of the Antarctic.

As we approached the summit the wind, which had been unpleasant in the early morning, now became very strong indeed and it was the fear of frost-bite which spurred what little energy we had left. My hope of seeing something of the southern side of the water-shed was disappointed, for when we reached the summit ridge we looked down into a boiling cauldron of cloud a few feet below us. This was rising rapidly and soon enveloped us. However, we did get one brief glimpse down to the little Simm Saga range which lay at our feet; and also into the head of the Sunderdunga Valley which we were so hoping to reach. What we saw went a long way to quenching that hope for there seemed to be very little break in the ten thousand feet of precipice which lay between us and the grassy floor of the valley below. I had refrained from taking any photographs on the way up in order to preserve the exposures for the summit. But before my numbed fingers would open and set the camera we were wrapped in a dense cloak of cloud, and we passed the remainder of our stay on the top clapping our hands and banging our feet about in an attempt to restore rapidly diminishing circulation. Then we hustled off the summit and embarked upon a descent which proved to be almost as trying as the ascent. On reaching the camp we packed up the tent and sleeping-bags, and in spite of the loads we had now to carry, we shot down over the lower ice-slopes at a tremendous speed, paying little respect to the crevasses which had caused us so much trouble on the previous day. Tilman greeted us with apparently unlimited tea. He had put in a useful day's work with the plane-table and had succeeded in fixing several important points about the glacier.

On the following day we went down to our base and, leaving a dump of flour there just sufficient to enable us to beat a retreat down the Rishi Ganga in the event of our failing to escape from

the basin to the east or south, we carried the remainder of our stuff to a pleasant little alp a couple of miles up the left bank of the main glacier. By now we had been able to make a fairly lengthy examination of the southern aspect of Nanda Devi. We had seen a curious diagonal spur running down in a south-easterly direction from about half-way up the main south ridge. This appeared to be accessible in its lower section and it seemed to us that we might be able to work our way for some distance along it. We decided to attempt to do this in order to get a comprehensive view of the southern section of the basin, though it did not even occur to me that we might also find a practicable route to the summit of the peak.

The morning of September 14 was brilliantly fine, and we started early carrying with us the usual light camp and enough food for Tilman (who was now recovered) and myself for two or three days. We crossed the main glacier and made our way again along the valley which lay at the foot of the great black buttresses of the southern ridge, fixing our position on the plane-table as we went and taking shots to distant landmarks. We camped that night by a pool of crystal clear water, on a lawn of close-cropped grass over which snowy eidelweiss grew in profusion.

It was an hour after dawn the following morning before we got away. It seemed as if the last remnants of the monsoon had departed. The glacier was silent, bound under the iron grip of frost; and we joyously sped over its desolate stony surface. Forty minutes of hard going took us to the foot of the black precipices which girdle the base of the great southern ridge. Here we found that the rock was well broken but firm and that the strata sloped in our favour which made the climbing a great deal easier than we had anticipated. Within an hour of leaving the glacier we had reached the crest of the diagonal spur which we had seen from a distance. This was as far as we expected to get and we sat down contentedly in the warm sunlight and gazed lazily at our unique surroundings.

We saw that the spur we were on, coming down from the main southern ridge of Nanda Devi, formed a gigantic glacier cirque. In front of us across a deep valley rose a stupendous ice-wall which formed the southern face of the twin peaks. We were too close and, for all our eighteen thousand five hundred feet, far too low to get anything but a very foreshortened view of the face and it was a long while before the colossal scale began to impress itself upon my imagination. The ice-wall was fringed on top by a

band of rock forming the actual summits of the twin peaks and the two mile ridge connecting them. By now the sun had been shining on this band for some hours and had already started to dislodge masses of rock, which set up an almost continuous moan as they hurtled through the air towards us, yet so great was the distance of the peaks above us that throughout the day we did not detect a single visible sign of these avalanches which must have involved several hundreds of tons of rock. The whole effect was very uncanny.

As it was such a brilliantly fine day and as yet quite early we decided that we would investigate the possibilities of climbing farther up the spur. A virtual tower rising straight out of the ridge blocked a way along the crest, but we soon found that we could traverse along the under tower on its eastern side and climb diagonally towards a gap in the ridge beyond. This we reached in a couple of hours without much difficulty, and were surprised to find that here again the inward sloping strata made progress comparatively easy. By now we were about nineteen thousand feet high and beginning to yet really excited. We had already overcome the apparently inaccessible lower part of the ridge and were still going strong. Was it possible that we had discovered the one key to the innermost defences of this amazing mountain? Of course, we would not be in a position to make an attempt on the summit but to have discovered the way was sufficient to work us into quite a frenzy of excitement. Up and up we went without finding any place which gave us more than a moment's hesitation. Our pace was slow by reason of the fact that the rocks were still under a deep covering of monsoon snow, but our progress was steady enough. The higher we got the more fully could we appreciate the immensity of the glacier cirque on the rim of which we were climbing.

We climbed on until about 2.30 p.m. when we halted and decided that we had come far enough. We estimated our height at close on twenty-one thousand feet. The ridge was certainly showing signs of becoming more difficult but for the next few hundred feet there did not appear to be any insuperable obstacle and we came to the definite conclusion that if a well-equipped party were to spend a couple of weeks over the job that there was a good chance that the ridge could be followed to the summit. It would be no easy task and the party would have to be supremely fit and competent. Prolonged siege tactics (which are so much the fashion in the Himalayas nowadays) would be too dangerous to be

justifiable, since this method would involve too many men in the upper camps, and if it were overtaken by bad weather high up such a party would be in a very serious plight. In high mountains, mobility is the keynote of efficiency and safety, and it is primarily for this reason that I find it hard to believe that a large, heavily organized expedition will ever achieve success on Everest.

We were now sufficiently high to get a true idea of the immensity of our surroundings, and even though I had been living for months amid perpendicularity on a huge scale I suffered from a feeling of panic which resembled the delirium of a fevered mind.

Our slow rate of descent was evidence that we had climbed too fast earlier in the day and night was falling as we made our way back across the glacier after yet another unforgettable day.

The morning of September 16 was spent mainly in plane-tableing, on the slopes above the camp, and in making further examination of Longstaff's Col. The more detailed study confirmed our first impressions that an ascent of the couloir with heavy loads would be too difficult and dangerous a job. We could not, however, tell for certain as so much depended upon whether the gully was composed of snow or ice. By now we had become really worked up about our chances of being able to force an exit over one of these gaps. In doing so, we would make a complete crossing of the range, thus linking up with the explorations of those who had attacked the rampart from the south and east; we would see for ourselves those valleys, which though not unexplored, we knew to be of surpassing loveliness; and the last phase of our quest would be through country new to us. If we were to fail we would be forced to retreat once more down the Rishi Nala, and from Joshimath to journey back by the way we had come, thus missing a rare and glorious climax to our little season of perfect happiness.

When we returned to camp early in the afternoon we found that the Sherpas had come up and were busily engaged in their hobby of building cairns. Packing up, we ran off down the glacier, reaching our little green alp before sundown, here to spend one more night lying in the open, dozing in the light of the half-moon and waking to watch the rosy light of dawn steal gently down the east-turned face of the "Blessed Goddess."

The week which followed has left with me a richer and more varied stock of impressions than any other I can recall. We started up the glacier to the south that morning, staggering under the weight of very heavy loads. I was feeling lazy and lagged behind the others, sitting down often to gaze at each new aspect



of the peaks around me. Once I found myself by a deep pool in the ice of the glacier, and stayed as if hypnotized by the reflections on the placid blue surface of the water. It was irresistible. I threw off my clothes, plunged in and swam for some seconds under water along the glistening walls of ice. The day ended in camp far up the glacier, under the icy cirque standing at its head.

A frigid night was followed by an even colder dawn and we were hurried along in spite of our cruel loads by the bitter morning breeze. The snow was iron-hard, and as the slope steepened the already burdened shoulders of the leader would ache painfully as he chipped steps, while those behind were frozen with inaction. The arrival of the sun changed all this and we were soon stamping a way, and sinking up to our knees at every step, while a fierce glare scorched our faces unbearably. Several large crevasses caused us some trouble, but we worked at full pressure and at 11.15 a.m. we reached the crest of the col. We found that this consisted of an extensive snow plateau which sloped gently towards the south, so that we were obliged to descend some five hundred feet before we could get any view of the southern precipices on which all our thoughts were concentrated. From the edge of the plateau we could look down into the cloud-filled Sunderdhunga Valley up which, as I mentioned earlier, Hugh Ruttledge and his guide, Emile Rey, had come in 1932 to attempt to gain access into the Nanda Devi Basin. In order to save the reader the trouble of referring back to that incident it may not be out of place to requote here, Mr. Ruttledge's description published in *The Times* of August 22, 1932, of the obstacle which now faced us:

"In a mood of hopeful anticipation our party, on May 25, trudged up the narrow glacier which leads from Sunderdhunga itself to the base of the wall, of which the greater part had been invisible from a distance. The Sherpas cheered derisively as a little avalanche had an ineffective shot at us from the cliffs above; and raced round the last corner. One step round it, and we were brought up all standing by a sight which almost took our remaining breath away. Six thousand feet of the steepest rock and ice. 'Nom de nom,' said Emile, while Nima exclaimed that this looked as bad as the north-west face of Kangchenjunga in 1930. However, we had come a long way to see this, so we advanced across the stony slopes to a point from which we hoped, by detailed examination, to reduce terrific appearance to milder reality. But the first impressions were accurate. Near the top of the wall, for about a mile and a half runs a terrace of ice some two hundred feet thick;

in fact, the lower edge of a hanging glacier. Under the pull of gravity large masses constantly break off from this terrace and thunder down to the valley below, polishing in their fall the successive bands of limestone precipice of which the face is composed. Even supposing the precipice to be climbable, an intelligent mountaineer may be acquitted on a charge of lack of enterprise if he declines to spend at least three days and two nights under fire from this artillery. An alternative is the choice of three knife-edge arêtes, excessively steep, sometimes overhanging in their middle and lower sections, on which even the eye of faith, assisted by binoculars, fails to see a single platform large enough to accommodate the most modest of climbing tents."

We dumped our loads in the snow and set about our task immediately. Remembering Ruttledge's description we decided that our best chance of success was to get on to one of the three arêtes or ridges, for though they were referred to as being "excessively steep," at least their crests would be safe from the bombardment of ice-avalanches. The clouds had now come up from below and our view was very restricted. After working over to the left for some distance, however, we came to the edge of a tremendously steep gully from which came an incessant rattle of stone falls. Beyond we could make out a dark mass which we concluded was the first of the rock arêtes. After hunting about for some time we found that in order to reach the arête we would be forced to run the gauntlet of the rock falls in the gully. As these were coming down at very short intervals the chances of our getting across without some member of the party being killed was very small, and the risk was quite unjustifiable. So that was that.

The ice-fall below us plunged out of sight. We returned to our loads and worked over to the right. In about twenty minutes we were brought up short and found that we were standing on the edge of the ice-terrace overhanging six thousand feet of polished limestone. It was a wonderful sight. Every now and then enormous masses of ice would break away from the cliffs we were standing on and crash with a fearful roar into the cloudy depths below. After satisfying ourselves that there was not the slightest hope in this direction we waited for some while to watch this unusual scene. It is not often that one gets a chance of watching a display of ice-avalanches from so close, and rarer still to see them breaking away from the very cliffs on which one is standing.

We returned disconsolately to our loads for a meal at 2.30 p.m. A cup of tea and satu put new heart into the party and we set

off to tackle the last line of possibility. This was the ice-fall which lay immediately below us and which separated the ice-terrace from the rock arêtes. A few feet of twisted and riven ice was all that we could see: beyond this the ice-fall plunged out of sight into the whirling mists which filled the depths below. It was useless to attempt to work out a line of attack from above and all we could do was to go straight at it and worry our way down by the tedious processes of trial and error. We had plenty of food with us, however, and we could afford to take our time. As long as we kept fairly well out of the line of bombardment from the ice-cliffs of the terrace and avoided a slip we could carry on for several days if necessary.

Soon we found ourselves on ice more torn and complicated and more frighteningly steep even than that which we had tackled six weeks before on the southern side of our Satopanth Pass. It was exceedingly strenuous work trying line after line without success, but as the evening wore on our energy seemed to increase, probably from a growing feeling of desperation. A series of slender ice-ledges suspended over space by some conjuring trick of nature would lead us downward to the brink of an impassable chasm. Then a wearisome retreat back by the way we had come to try a new and perhaps equally futile chance. The farther we went the more involved became the precipitous maze we were in, until my head began to whirl and I began to think we should neither find our way on nor back. By dark, however, we had managed to get some hundreds of feet down and we crept into our sleeping-bags in a slightly more hopeful frame of mind.

The night was an extremely cold one and we decided not to start before the sun was up on the following morning as our clothes had become sodden in the soft snow of the previous day and an early start would almost certainly have resulted in frost-bite. This decision gave us a moment of leisure in which to watch a sunrise whose beauty far surpassed any I had seen before. In the right and left foreground were the icy walls, steep-sided and grim, enclosing the head of the Maiktoli Valley; in front beyond the brink of the ice-ledge on which we were camped, and immensely far below was a lake of vivid colour at the bottom of which we could see the Sunderdhunga River coiling like a silver water snake, flowing away into the placid cloud-sea which stretched without a break over the plains of India.

The day was one of heavy toil, over-packed with thrills. Hour after hour we puzzled and hacked our way down; sometimes

lowering our loads and ourselves on the rope down an ice-cliff, at others chipping laboriously across the steep face of a tower or along a knife-edged crest, always in constant dread of finding ourselves completely cut off. The bitter cold of the early morning changed towards midday to a fierce heat and glare which robbed us of much of our strength and energy. Our heavy loads hindered every movement and threatened to throw us off our balance. But we were all completely absorbed in our task, and worked on throughout the day without pause.

Evening found us working on dry ice three thousand feet down. Beside us to our right was a prominent rock ridge, which, though lying immediately below the higher line of hanging glaciers, offered us a heaven-sent alternative if only we could reach it. We cut steps to the edge of the glacier and from there we looked down a sixty-foot ice-cliff into a steep slabby gully. The gully was evidently a path for ice-avalanches, but it was narrow and once in it we could run across in a couple of minutes. By chipping away the ice in a large circle we soon fashioned a bollard. Round this we fastened a rope, down which we slid, recovering the rope from the ice-bollard without difficulty. A short race across the gully with our hearts in our mouths took us to a little ledge under the overhanging walls of the ridge, which offered a convenient and well-protected site for a camp. No sooner had we got the tents pitched than there came a fearful roar from above and for fully a minute a cascade of huge ice-blocks crashed down the gully, sending up a spray of ice-dust, while a number of ice-splinters landed harmlessly on the tents.

The day, begun with the sight of a dawn fair beyond description and crowded with so much vivid life, closed with us stretched luxuriously on our ledge, perched high up amongst the precipitous glaciers of one of the grandest of mountain cirques. Lightning flickered somewhere to the east; the distant thunder was almost indistinguishable from the growl of the avalanches. Mists floated stealthily in and out of the corries about us, forming and dissolving as if at will. Far to the south the placid sea of monsoon cloud still stretched over the plains, and the silvery light of a full moon lent to the scene an appearance of infinite depth.

Three thousand feet of precipice still remained to be descended and this took us nearly the whole of the following day. Frequently we had to rope down the more difficult sections. On one of these occasions one of the sacks came open; most of the contents fell out, bounced once and hummed out of sight. In the afternoon

we were enveloped in mist and had considerable difficulty in groping our way downwards; but Angharkay distinguished himself by a really brilliant piece of route finding and in the evening we reached a collection of rude stone shelters, used by shepherds, and known as Maiktoli. The shepherds had departed some weeks before.

The high mountains were now showing signs of approaching winter, a sharp reminder that our season of freedom and perfect happiness was at an end. But the marches which followed have left their quota of memories. A struggle to find an exit from the grim gorge in the upper Sunderdhunga Valley into which we had blundered in a heavy mist; our last encounter with a swollen mountain river; an enormous feast on wild raspberries and Himalayan blackberries lower down the valley; the generous hospitality of the first villagers we met, and the sweetness of their honey; the sparkling sunlit mornings, as one lay, sleepily watching the smoke of a distant wood fire mounting straight up into the clear air; a dawn on the distant ice-clad giants, whose presence we had just left.

Return to civilization was hard, but, in the sanctuary of the Blessed Goddess we had found the lasting peace which is the reward of those who seek to know high mountain places.

# THE SHIP THAT BEAT THE BRITISH NAVY

By  
CHRISTOPHER SWANN

SOME people seem to bear charmed lives; experiences that would mean death to most folk they take in their stride, as it were, and go on to the next great adventure. So it is with ships. Mishaps, small in themselves, may destroy nine ships out of ten; the tenth ship will sail on, unperturbed, and happy. So they are called happy ships, these last, as well as lucky ships.

And if ever there was a lucky ship in this world it was *Goeben*—battle-cruiser of the German Navy; harried over the seas, pounded by big guns, bombarded from the air for six days and finally "left for dead" on an alien shore; yet bobbing up once more to sail proudly in her old age, the scars of battle still upon her—obsolete as a battleship but a living reality as a ship of battle, at the head of a squadron. She was born in 1911; in 1936 she was still going strong. The story of *Goeben* is one of hairbreadth escapes, dare-devil dash and, if you like, low cunning.

It is a story fit to rank with the doings of such ships as *Golden Hind* and *Revenge*, which sailed the seas in the spacious days of Elizabeth. The Great War produced no more amazing epic, and as there are no national barriers between men under sail or steam, her exploits—though she was an enemy vessel—were as much admired by her opponents as by the people of her own nation. Naturally, during the war, the exploits which made her famous were minimized by her country's enemies—but the war happened a very long time ago; we can look through the right end of the telescope without being suspected of lack of patriotism.

According to some historians of the war—and they are legion—*Goeben* was responsible for Gallipoli. War is full of "ifs," but it seems reasonable to suppose that if *Goeben*, a German battleship six hundred and ten feet long, carrying one thousand and thirteen officers and men, with a speed of twenty-eight knots, with eight 14-inch guns, twelve 6-inch guns and lots of twelve-pounders, had not been able to reach the Dardanelles at the beginning of the war, the war might have been very different. Turkey at that time was

"sitting on the fence." It was a toss up to her which, if any, power she supported. Like most people and most nations she wanted to be in on the strongest side. At that time the strongest side had not been determined. The Allies offered her nothing but promises; Central Powers offered her rather less than this—that is to say, protection and autonomy should they be victorious.

Turkey held the key of the Black Sea. It was at that time a rusty key; it needed lubrication to make it turn the wards of the lock which would open the Straits of the Dardanelles. There are those who say that British diplomacy was deficient at this period; that more oil and less friction would have turned the key in our favour. But that as it may be. *Goeben* supplied not oil but a bombshell. After a spectacular dash from the British and French squadrons she entered the Dardanelles; caused Germany's stock to rocket, enhanced the prestige of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and left Britain still fumbling at the keyhole. That was the meaning and significance of the great adventure of *Goeben*. There were many heart-burnings here at home; much rejoicing across the German Ocean; and the repercussion of this spectacular sortie did not subside until much later, when thousands of men from all over the British Empire had landed and died on Gallipoli.

And, naturally, as no ship, no matter how wonderful she is, can have an adventure without the guiding spirit of an adventurer behind her, there must come in here the name of Vice-Admiral M. E. Souchon. At the beginning of the war he was in command of the Mediterranean Fleet of the German Navy.

When, towards the end of 1912, the Balkan crisis afforded Germany an excuse to make a demonstration of German naval power in the Mediterranean, Rear-Admiral Souchon was selected to command a squadron of cruisers. He hoisted his flag in *Goeben*, and with *Breslau* left Wilhelmshaven for the Golden Horn. Later the squadron was reinforced by two other light cruisers, *Strassburg* and *Dresden*. While he stayed in Turkish waters he enhanced the prestige of Germany among the Turks—the young Turks, as they were called in those days, when the break-away from the old regime of autocracy and cruelty had just been made. Frequently his flagship, *Goeben*, and his other vessels were examined minutely by Turkish naval officers who saw, in *Goeben*—by far the largest armoured war vessel among the fleets of the world using Constantinople—a new indication of the Kaiser's might. Remember this was long before the world war. Admiral Souchon was but sowing the seeds of a harvest he was to reap in abundance during

the war days to follow. Souchon proved himself a clever diplomat; even he did not know how his flagship with which he so greatly impressed the Turks, was to make history.

Later, Souchon was to distinguish himself in another way. In November, 1918, when he was head of the naval mission in Turkey, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Baltic naval station and of the port of Kiel. It was an appointment barren of honour, for at Kiel at that hour was to begin the mutiny of the German sailors which ended the war so far as the naval might of the Fatherland was concerned. Officers of the battleship *Kaiser* had just been overpowered by the mutinous crews at the point of revolvers when Admiral Souchon arrived. He had been sent from Berlin to quell the mutiny. The authorities hoped that a man whose name was revered for his handling of *Goeben* would be able to handle the mutineers. It was a vain hope; Souchon knew it. But he went. At the station to meet the train was a party of sailors. They took the admiral from the train and locked him in a waiting-room while they discussed their grievances with him.

Souchon was a sailor of the old regime. He had commanded all sorts of men in the semi-brutal "spit and polish" traditions of navies on all the seas—for the sailorman is generally a child at heart and has responded through all history, more readily to the threat of the rope's-end followed by the lubricatory "splicing of the main brace," rather than an appeal to reason; but directly Souchon reached Kiel he realized that the old order had given place to the new—that years of enforced inaction, supplemented by the arguments of agitators—had made ships' companies a company of individuals. So he was taken to the station waiting-room and held as a hostage because it was feared soldiers were on their way to quell the mutiny.

Food supplies were in the hands of the sailors; machine-guns were mounted at strategical points—the sailors swore they would not go back to their ships unless peace was signed. Admiral Souchon had an impossible task, and he met it in the only way. He saw the sailors' leaders, asked about their grievances, and approved of all their demands. These included the refusal to salute officers, and the closing of all officers' casinos. To anyone who knew the German Navy before the war, these demands, and the submission to them, were revolutionary. The mutineers put forward "fourteen points"—just as Mr. Wilson did; they included as the main plank "the complete immobility of the German War Fleet." All the world knows what happened to the German War Fleet—the



journey to Scapa Flow—and then the heroic scuttling of the ships that could no longer fight. Better to die like heroes, they said, than to live disgraced.

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The story of *Goeben* opens at the beginning of August, 1914. A few days previously while in the Mediterranean, the crew of *Breslau* passed the British destroyers *Defence* and *Racoon*, and cheers were exchanged by the ships' companies. Later she encountered the cruiser *Gloucester* and in accordance with sea courtesy invited her officers to come aboard the following evening and have "the other half" in the wardroom. But during the night *Gloucester* disappeared. She had received secret orders. Four days later she was chasing *Breslau* through the Mediterranean. Meanwhile orders had reached *Breslau* from the German Admiralty to leave for Brindisi and await orders there. She went there at twenty-eight knots, and on the way her wireless gave the following message: "Political relations broken off between Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria and Italy) and France, Russia and Great Britain."

*Breslau* joined her colleague *Goeben* at Brindisi on August 1, and this pair, who were destined to have many adventures in company, were later joined by *Geneva*, a German passenger liner. On August 2 the following message was received from Vice-Admiral Souchon: "I have requisitioned you. Go to Messina." So to Messina fared for its earthquake. No sooner had they arrived there than a blow descended on the German commanders. The Italian government refused to allow them to coal or to provision. A warship is as helpless without coal as a runner without legs, and the Germans frantically telegraphed their admiral who promptly sent a message to Rome saying: "We demand coal." Italy was firm. Though allied to Germany and Austria, she was unwilling to be dragged into war because her hereditary enemy, the hated Hapsburgs, wished to avenge the murder of their archduke in Bosnia. Italy decided to remain neutral—all the world knows that when Turkey went in the war on the side of Germany—she joined the Allies and fought against her old allies.

But *Breslau*, *Goeben* and *Geneva* were lying off Messina with almost empty bunkers. Meanwhile the admiral had been busy. He demanded from Rome, and obtained, permission to use all the coal on board the German steamers in the port, and this was transferred to the three vessels. On August 3, in the morning, *Goeben* and *Breslau* put to sea. Then came the news that France

had declared war, and presently the orders that *Breslau* and *Goeben* must proceed to Constantinople with all speed. The admiral determined to get in the first blow. At four o'clock in the morning in the waning moonlight *Goeben* came to the coast of Algeria, dependency of France. Then she steamed to Phillipville while *Breslau* made for Bone. Each ship bombarded the coast towns; there was no response. France was at war; it was a gesture; the gesture of the little boy who runs before the big boy, says "Yah!" and retreats. At 10.50 that morning British warships were sighted.

Now was the time to cut and run. There were some hours to elapse before Germany was at war with England—how to utilize them was the question. Admiral Souchan decided to make for Messina and coal. Every man in the ship except the executive deck officers joined in the work of stoking the boilers. Doctors, officers off duty, stewards, were pressed into service with the "black squad" stoking for life and liberty. "The English think we can do only twelve knots," said Souchon, "we will show them we can do double that." And so the race went on until "at seven o'clock in the morning, we lost the Englishmen." At 11.12 that night, August 4, came the wireless message from Berlin:—"England has declared war." Here was the culmination of all the dreams—the realization of all the wardroom toasts "Am Tag." Germany was at war with the nation she regarded as her hereditary enemy. Forgotten was Waterloo when Blücher rode in to outflank Napoleon's legions; remembered only was 1870 and the hated "Entente Cordiale" which united two nations against one; remembered only was the race for colonial expansion hampered at every point by British imperialism. War with England. "Der Tag."

So four o'clock on the morning of the fifth found *Goeben* and *Breslau* back at Messina. *Geneva* was there, her bunkers full, but the Italians refused to allow the warships to coal. "We are neutral," they said. Again German ships were denuded of their coal. Then came another order. The vessels must leave the port within twenty-four hours. On August 6 the admiral ordered his ships to break through the watching British vessels and gain the Dardanelles. He decided on a ruse. "I want," he said, "to create the impression that we are wanting to get to the Adriatic . . . we shall veer round in the night and make for Cape Matapan, if possible throwing off the enemy." With flags flying and bands playing the ships reached the open sea. As they gained it a wireless message came in to the radio men, all of whom were doing constant

duty at the headphones. It was from Kaiser Wilhelm II and it said: "His majesty expects *Goeben* and *Breslau* to succeed in breaking through."

They were out at sea—then came the report from the lookout—"Cruiser approaching from the north-east." It was *Gloucester*. The admiral heard the report, decided to ignore *Gloucester*; to decline action. Meanwhile wireless operators on the German boats heard a jumble of signals in code; evidently from the cruiser to her superior ship. They could make nothing of the code till presently the repetition of certain symbols enabled them—by a good deal of guesswork—to identify one set of signals as meaning "*Goeben*." Later by more guesswork they were able to obtain a complete or semi-complete message which indicated that *Goeben* was making for the Adriatic. They were proud of their work, these German wireless men. They asked the admiral: "Shall we jam his messages? We can do it." The admiral said "No." If the British were being told he was making for the Adriatic so much the better.

Then it became dark, and from the bridge came the order: "Full starboard; steer for Cape Matapan." The British ships saw the manoeuvre too late, because at the instant of the change of course the admiral ordered his wireless operator to jam the wireless. The operators were at last in their element; they felt they were doing something now. For over two hours they piled meaningless signals upon the ether. It was impossible for any other operator under the sun to read anything he wanted to read. "Brr, brr, brr," went on the jam. The patrol boat sent to watch the movements of the Germans, tried in vain, time after time, to get a message through to her fleet lying off Malta and the Otranto Straits ready to intercept the flying cruisers, and prevent them breaking into the Adriatic. Meanwhile the Germans were steaming eastwards without let or hindrance. It was a clever bit of work. Eventually the wireless messages of the patrol cruiser got through—when it was too late to do anything.

Whatever circumstances allowed *Goeben* and *Breslau* to reach Constantinople it was not the lack of vigilance of the British ships. Circumstances piled one on top of another to help the German fugitives. Admiral Sir Ernest Troubridge had standing orders not to engage a superior force in daylight. *Goeben* was definitely superior and got away. Admiral Troubridge, to clear himself and his men of any suggestion of negligence applied for a court martial. It was held and he was honourably acquitted. This

episode did not interfere with the record of the distinguished seaman. In 1916 he was promoted vice-admiral, in 1919 admiral, and given the K.C.M.G. He died of heart failure at a tea dance in Biarritz in 1926.

On August 15, 1914, *Goeben* and *Breslau* were bought by Turkey for £4,000,000. *Goeben* had cost £2,250,000 to build; *Breslau* £400,000. At that time Turkey was not at war so the ships entered the Dardanelles under the Turkish flag—the Crescent—the German fittings, coats of arms and national emblems were dismantled. There was an international quarrel about the sale, which was held to be illegal, but Turkey quoted the example of two Turkish ships building in British yards, which had been seized on the outbreak of war. Anyhow, possession was nine points of the law.

From that moment so far as international relations were concerned, *Goeben* and *Breslau* ceased to exist. They became known as *Yavuz Selim* (named after Sultan Selim, the grim) and *Midellen*, they became the ornaments of the Turkish Navy. They were in the navy of a neutral—at that time—nation. They were in a very enviable position. And under those names they remained until the end of the war; though the British Admiralty insisted upon calling them by the German names originally given them. They flew the Crescent instead of the Eagle.

Here is another commentary on the escape of *Goeben*; this time from the House of Commons. On April 15, 1919, Commander Bellairs, who for years had tried unsuccessfully to secure publication by the admiralty of the proceedings by court martial on Admiral Troubridge, read to members of the House extracts from the findings, which, he said, had been sent to him anonymously. He said that our Mediterranean forces at the time were three battle-ships, four armoured cruisers, four light cruisers and twelve destroyers. The battle-cruisers, each of which was capable of tackling *Goeben*, were ordered by the admiralty to patrol a line two hundred and fifty to three hundred miles from Messina, into which *Goeben* had been chased. The four armoured cruisers were told by the admiralty:

"It is of importance that the strength of the Mediterranean Fleet should not be reduced in the early stages of the war. You are to avoid being brought to battle by a superior force of the enemy."

That order by the admiralty, of which Mr. Churchill was First Lord and Prince Louis of Battenberg (afterwards the Marquis of

Milford Haven) was a member, was an imperative order. *Goeben* could steam at twenty-eight knots, compared with the twenty knots of the armoured cruisers, and her guns had a range of twenty-eight thousand yards, while the cruisers' guns ranged between fourteen thousand and fifteen thousand yards. With her speed, *Goeben* could have steamed round Admiral Troubridge's squadron at sixteen thousand yards, and finished off his cruisers one by one. In other words, *Goeben* could have "made rings round" the English. In those circumstances, the commander told the House, if Admiral Troubridge met *Goeben* in the open sea during daylight hours he was bound by his orders to regard her as a "superior force." The twelve destroyers, which could have attacked *Goeben* at night, were short of coal, no provision having been made to supply them. No colliers had been arranged for. Therefore, said the commander, so far as the actions of the battle-cruisers, armoured cruisers and the destroyers, the admiralty at home were responsible.

So for nearly three years *Goeben* and *Breslau* carried on their smash-and-grab policy of sea warfare around the Dardanelles.

On November 20, 1914, *Goeben* and *Breslau*, on a sortie from the Dardanelles, met a division of Russian battleships on their return to Sebastopol after a cruise along the Anatolian coast. The first shots from the Russian flagship *Svyatoy Evstafi*, said the official Russian account at the time, struck *Goeben* and caused an explosion and outbreak of fire. The account goes on: "*Goeben* opened fire after some delay . . . and then disappeared into the mist." The Russian flagship, however, did not escape scot-free; for as her general staff admitted, she had three officers, twenty-nine men killed; one officer, nineteen men seriously wounded, and five men slightly wounded. Allied opinion construed this encounter into a defeat for the German ships, but in view of the fact that they were hopelessly outnumbered, and that despite the fire reported as having broken out in *Goeben* the battleship was soon afterwards on the seas once more, it may be regarded as somewhat optimistic.

Sorties into the Black Sea continued. The two vessels sank many merchant ships, but always managed to escape capture. Once together they bombarded Sebastopol.

May, 1915, saw another attack on *Goeben*, this time by the Russian Black Sea Fleet. She answered their fire, and helped by *Breslau* and several Turkish destroyers, managed to make a running fight of it. Several times she was struck—at one time, an observer wrote, a huge column of water almost obscured by black smoke, rose up from her beam—but again she managed to get away.

Reports reached the Allies that she had "limped" into the Bosphorus, but that limp, if such it was, did not finally cripple her. She was soon out again making herself a nuisance to vessels plying around the Straits. She was always an imposing sight; squat, wide of beam, yet cutting the water into twin cascades before her bow. The "bone in her teeth" was always very pronounced. It must be remembered that she was built in 1911 before streamlining was fully understood. When she moved, as they say, she moved. So she went on her ways; swaggering out to menace shipping; stealing back after nightfall to avoid the "superior force" agitated wireless signals had brought, until at last came the great test.

The sinking of *Breslau*, the end of a long partnership of the sea—long as sea partnerships go in war days—came on Sunday, January 20, 1918. The account is given, navy fashion, in the official announcement from the admiralty on Tuesday night. "At 5.20 a.m.," it says, "when H.M. destroyer *Lizard* was about two miles from the north-easterly point of Imbros (in the Aegean Sea) on patrol duty, she sighted *Breslau* steaming in a northerly direction to the south-east of Cape Kephala, shortly followed by *Goeben* about a mile astern. H.M.S. *Lizard* at once gave the alarm and, opening fire, proceeded to keep in as close touch as possible with the enemy ships. *Goeben* and *Breslau* engaged *Lizard* at about eleven thousand yards, straddling her without hitting. *Goeben* now sighted the monitors in Kusu Bay on the north-east corner of Imbros and engaged them."

That is the beginning of the official narrative, but eye-witnesses' stories tell more graphically the story of this epic engagement. *Breslau* continued to fight *Lizard*, and so excellent was her gunfire at long range, that *Lizard* was prevented from closing in. Every naval man's ideal in sea warfare is close contact, so that the always problematic fire of big guns may be followed by the almost certain smash-up at close range by torpedo. A naval torpedo, carrying death and mutilation behind its nose: the sensitive nose that detonates on impact, is the most terrible weapon of sea warfare. But it must be used at close range. A battleship travels at the speed of an express train; nearly a mile a minute when under forced draught—a torpedo's maximum speed is thirty miles an hour. Imagine the calculations necessary to make a hit. The speed of the enemy ship; the speed of the attacking ship; the speed of the torpedo. It is not to be forgotten that dozens of torpedoes are at the bottom of the sea—they sink when the motor ceases to propel them—or that some few exploded themselves on desolate

rocky coasts with a roar that scared into activity the sleeping inhabitants.

So the torpedoes for the moment were out of the battle. The destroyer *Tigress* now joined *Lizard* and together they tried to cover the monitors by forming a smoke-screen, but the fire of *Goeben* stopped all that. Meanwhile *Raglan* had been hit and sank. Then the Germans ceased fire and altered course to the southward. They were pursued by the British vessels firing all the while, and at 7 a.m. when *Breslau* was about six miles south of Kephala, three explosions occurred in her. The first was aft her funnels. Then came more explosions, and at 7.10 she sank by the stern, heeling over as she went down. Thus did *Breslau* and *Goeben* "part brass rags." They had sailed the seas together upon their unlawful occasions; they parted as all good sailormen wish to part, under the guns of the enemy.

Then out of the Dardanelles came steaming under high pressure, four Turkish destroyers supported by—or supporting—an old Turkish cruiser. *Tigress* and *Lizard* tackled the destroyers, driving them back into the straits by a hail of shell-fire. None of them was able to launch a torpedo. Meanwhile *Goeben* went on her way to the south, but now the British planes took a hand and repeatedly dropped bombs, so she altered course and headed for the Dardanelles whence the destroyers had disappeared. But on the way she struck a mine and began to settle down aft with a list of fifteen degrees. Naturally she was semi-crippled. She steamed as well as she might, but speed was considerably reduced. Then she proceeded up the straits, escorted by the four destroyers which had dashed back to help her. It was a gallant effort to bring in the lame duck under constant fire from British ships and aeroplanes. The planes made at least two direct hits when she was at Chanak, and *Goeben* was in such a state that she headed for the shore and beached at the extreme end of Nagra Point. More bombs were dropped on her, but by this time Turkish and German planes had arrived, and they engaged the British aircraft, shooting one down.

Then shore batteries at Cape Helles took a hand and began to blaze away at *Tigress* and *Lizard* who had abandoned chasing *Goeben*. These vessels retired out of range, leaving the work of smashing *Goeben* to British aircraft. There was yet to come another factor into this extraordinary naval action. The periscope of a submarine was seen, and the two British destroyers began a new hunt—but without success. Meanwhile they had been able to save some of *Breslau's* survivors.

And here are the final scenes in the story of the *Goeben*. When she was driven ashore it was found that she had hit no fewer than five mines; two in the Black Sea early in the war, three during her attack on British ships outside the Dardanelles in the spring of 1917. In each case she suffered hull damage, but her watertight compartments in some extraordinary means kept her afloat until the final engagement which caused her stranding. Yet though she had been hit by dozens of bombs from the air during a six-day attack; though she had tons of water inside her when the war was over, she made Constantinople under her own steam.

And so that could well be the end of *Goeben*. But it was not, for in July, 1936, she steamed proudly at the head of the Turkish Fleet to re-occupy Imbros and Tenedos Islands in the Aegean Sea, which were demilitarized under the Lausanne Straits Convention and refortified under the Montreux Convention . . . a fitting climax for an old sea rover.



## ESCAPE FROM THE BASTILLE

ANON

**L**ATUDE, who was in his twenty-fifth year when his misfortunes began, was the son of the Marquis de Latude, a military officer, and was born in Languedoc. He was intended for the engineering service, but the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle prevented him from being enrolled.

The notorious Marchioness de Pompadour was then in the zenith of her power, and was as much detested by the people as she was favoured by the sovereign. As Latude was one day sitting in the garden of the Tuileries, he heard two men vehemently inveighing against her. A thought struck him, that, by turning this circumstance to account, he might obtain her patronage. His plan was a clumsy one, and it was clumsily executed. He began by putting into the post office a packet of harmless powder, directed to the marchioness. He then waited on her, related the conversation which he had overheard, said that he had seen them put a packet into the post office, and expressed his fears that it contained some extremely subtle poison. She offered him a purse of gold, but he refused it, and declared that he was only desirous of being rewarded by her protection. Suspicious of his purpose, she wished to see his handwriting, and therefore, under pretence of intending to communicate with him, asked for his address. He wrote it, and unfortunately for him, he wrote it in the same hand in which he had directed the packet of pretended poison. He was then graciously dismissed. The sameness of the writing, and the result of the experiments which she ordered to be made on the contents of the packet, convinced her that the whole was a fraud. It is scarcely possible not to smile at the blundering folly of the youthful imposter. Had he sent real poison, and disguised his own handwriting, there is every probability that he would have succeeded.

But this proved to be no laughing matter for the luckless Latude. The marchioness looked upon the trick as an unpardonable insult, and she was not slow in revenging it. In the course of a few days, while he was indulging in golden dreams, he was painfully awakened from them by the appearance of the officers of justice. They carried him to the Bastille, and there he was stripped,

deprived of his money, jewels, and papers, clothed in wretched rags, and shut up in the Tower du Cour.

On the following day, May 2, 1749, he was interrogated by M. Berryer, the lieutenant of police. Unlike many of his class, Berryer was a man of feeling; he promised to intercede for him with the marchioness, and in the meanwhile, he endeavoured to make him as comfortable as a man could be who was robbed of his liberty. To make the time pass less heavily, he gave him a comrade, a Jew, a man of abilities, Abuzaglo by name, who was accused of being a secret British agent. The two captives soon became friends; Abuzaglo had hopes of speedy liberation through the influence of the Prince of Conti, and he promised to obtain the exercise of that influence in behalf of his companion. Latude, on his part, in case of his being first released, bound himself to strain every nerve to rescue Abuzaglo.

Ever on the watch to catch the conversation of the prisoners, the jailers appear to have obtained a knowledge of the hopes and reciprocal engagements of the friends. When Latude had been four months at the Bastille, three turnkeys entered, and said that an order was come to set him free. Abuzaglo embraced him, and conjured him to remember his promise. But no sooner had the joyful Latude crossed the threshold of his prison, than he was told that he was only going to be removed to Vincennes. Abuzaglo was liberated shortly after; but believing that Latude was free, and had broken his word to him, he ceased to take an interest in his fate.

It is not wonderful that the health of Latude gave way under the pressure of grief and disappointment. M. Berryer came to console him, removed him to the most comfortable apartment in the castle, and allowed him to walk daily for two hours in the garden. But he did not conceal that the marchioness was inflexible; and in consequence of this, the captive, who felt a prophetic fear that he was destined to perpetual imprisonment, resolved to make an attempt to escape. Nearly nine months elapsed before he could find an opportunity to carry his plan into effect. The moment at length arrived. One of his fellow prisoners, an ecclesiastic, was frequently visited by an abbé; and this circumstance he made the basis of his project. To succeed, it was necessary for him to elude the vigilance of two turnkeys, who guarded him while he walked, and of four sentinels, who watched the outer doors; and this was no easy matter. Of the turnkeys, one often waited in the garden while the other went to fetch the prisoner. Latude

began by accustoming the second turnkey to see him hurry down-stairs, and join the first in the garden. When the day came on which he was determined to take flight, he, as usual, passed rapidly down the stairs without exciting any suspicion, his keeper having no doubt that he should find him in the garden. At the bottom was a door, which he hastily bolted to prevent the second turnkey from giving the alarm to his companion. Successful thus far, he knocked at the gate which led out of the castle. It was opened, and with an appearance of much eagerness, he asked for the abbé, and was answered that the sentinel had not seen him. "Our priest has been waiting for him in the garden more than two hours," exclaimed Latude; "I have been running after him in all directions to no purpose; but, egad, he shall pay me for my running!" He was allowed to pass. He repeated the same inquiry to the three other sentinels, received similar answers, and at last found himself beyond his prison walls. Avoiding as much as possible the high road, he traversed the fields and vineyards, and finally reached Paris, where he shut himself up in a retired lodging.

In the first moments of recovered liberty, the feelings of Latude were those of unmingled pleasure. They were, however, soon alloyed by doubt, apprehension, and anxiety. What was he to do? Whither was he to fly? To remain concealed was impossible, and even had it been possible, would have been only another kind of captivity; to fly from the kingdom was nearly if not quite as difficult; and besides, he was reluctant to give up the gaieties of the capital and his prospects of advancement. In this dilemma he romantically determined to throw himself upon the generosity of his persecutor. "I drew up," says he, "a memorial, which I addressed to the king. I spoke in it of Madame de Pompadour with respect, and of my fault towards her with repentance. I entreated she would be satisfied with the punishment I had undergone; or, if fourteen months' imprisonment had not expiated my offence, I ventured to implore the clemency of her I had offended, and threw myself on the mercy of my sovereign. I concluded my memorial by naming the asylum I had chosen." To use such language was indeed sounding the very base strings of humility.

This appeal of the sheep to the wolf was answered in a wolf-like manner. Latude was arrested without delay, and immured in the Bastille. It was a part of the tactics of the prison to inspire hopes, for the purpose of adding the pain of disappointment to

the other sufferings of a prisoner. He was accordingly told that he was taken into custody merely to ascertain by what means he had escaped. He gave a candid account of the stratagem to which he had resorted; but instead of being set free, as he had foolishly expected, he was thrown into a dungeon, and subjected to the harshest treatment.

Again his compassionate friend, the lieutenant of police, came to his relief. He could not release him from his dungeon, but did all that lay in his power to render it less wearisome. He consoled with him; tried, but in vain, to soften his tormentor; and, as a loophole in the vault admitted light enough to allow of reading, he ordered him to be supplied with books, pens, ink, and paper. For six months these resources enabled Latude to bear his fate with some degree of fortitude. His patience was then exhausted, and he gave way to rage and despair, in the paroxysms of which he vented his angry feelings in epigrams and satirical verses. One of these compositions, which is certainly not deficient in bitterness, he was imprudent enough to write on the margin of a book which had been lent to him. Latude had taken the precaution to write this in a feigned hand; but he was not aware that, whenever a prisoner returned a book, every page of it was carefully examined. The jailers discovered the epigram, and took the volume to John Lebel, the governor, who dutifully hastened to lay it before the marchioness. Her fury was extreme. Sending for M. Berryer, she exclaimed to him, in a voice half-smothered with passion, "See here! learn to know the man for whom you are so much interested, and dare again to solicit my clemency!"

Eighteen dreary months passed away, during which Latude was strictly confined to his dungeon, scarcely hearing the sound of a human voice. At last M. Berryer took upon himself the responsibility of removing him to a better apartment, and even allowing him to have the attendance of a servant. A young man, named Cochar, was found willing to undertake the monotonous and soul-depressing task of being domestic to a prisoner. He was gentle and sympathizing, and in so far was qualified for his office; but he had miscalculated his own strength, and the weight of the burden he was to bear. He drooped, and in a short time he was stretched on the bed of mortal sickness. Fresh air and liberty might have saved him. Those, however, he could not obtain; for it was a rule that the fate of anyone who entered into the service of a prisoner, became linked

with that of his master, and that he must not expect to quit the Bastille till his employer was set at large. It was not till Cochar was expiring, that the jailers would so much as consent to remove him from the chamber of Latude. Within three months of his entrance into the Bastille he ceased to exist.

Latude was inconsolable for the loss of the poor youth, who had always endeavoured to comfort him, as long as he had spirits to do so. To mitigate his grief, M. Berryer obtained for him the society of a fellow-captive, who could scarcely fail to have a perfect communion of feeling with him. This new associate, D'Alegre by name, was about his own age, full of activity, spirit, and talent, and had committed the irremissible crime of offending the Marchioness de Pompadour. Taking it for granted that she was reclaimable, though on what ground he did so it would be difficult to discover, he had written to her a letter, in which he apprized her of the public hatred, and pointed out the means by which he thought she might remove it, and become an object of affection. For giving this advice, he had already spent three years within the walls of the Bastille. Yet his woes were now only beginning. The unfortunate D'Alegre had ample cause to lament his having forgotten the scriptural injunction, not to cast pearls before swine.

M. Berryer took the same warm interest in D'Alegre as in Latude. He was indefatigable in his exertions to obtain their pardon; and for a while he flattered himself that he should succeed. At last, wearied by his importunity, the marchioness vowed that her vengeance should be perpetual, and she commanded him never again to mention their names. He was therefore obliged to communicate to them the melancholy tidings, that their chains could be broken only by her disgrace or death. D'Alegre was almost overwhelmed by the first shock of this intelligence; it inspired Latude, on the contrary, with a sort of insane energy, and his mind immediately began to revolve projects of escape. The very idea of escaping would seem to be indicative of madness.

Latude records the following version:—As we cast our eyes on the walls of the Bastille, which are above six feet thick, four iron bars at the windows, and as many in the chimney; and as we considered by how many armed men the prison is guarded, the height of the walls, and the trenches most commonly full of water,—it seemed morally impossible for two prisoners immured in a cell, and destitute of human assistance, to make their escape.

It was necessary to have one thousand four hundred feet of

cord, two ladders, one of wood, from twenty to thirty feet in length, and another of rope one hundred and eighty; to remove several iron bars from the chimney, and to bore a hole in one night through a wall many feet thick, at a distance of only fifteen feet from a sentinel. It was necessary to create the articles I have mentioned to accomplish our escape, and we had no resource but our own hands. It was necessary to conceal the wooden and the rope ladder of two hundred and fifty steps, a foot long and an inch thick, and several other prohibited particulars, in a prisoner's room; though the officers, accompanied by the turnkey, paid us a visit many times a week, and honoured our persons with a strict examination.

You must have been confined in the Bastille to know how wretches are treated there. Figure to yourself ten years spent in a room without seeing or speaking to the prisoner over your head. Many times have there been immured the husband, the wife, and a family of children, for a number of years, without either apprehending that a relation was near. You never hear any news there; let the king die, let the ministry be totally changed, you are not told a syllable of the matter. The officers, the surgeon, the turnkeys say nothing to you but "Good morning!" "Good evening!" "Do you stand in need of anything?"

There is a chapel, in which is daily performed one mass, and on holidays and Sundays three. In the chapel are five little closets; the prisoner is placed in one of these, when the magistrate gives him leave to be present at the celebration of that ceremony; he is taken back after the elevation, so that no priest ever views the face of a prisoner, and the latter never sees more than the back of the priest. M. Berryer had granted me permission to hear mass on Sundays and Wednesdays, and had allowed the same liberty to my companion. He had given that leave also to the prisoner who lodged above us. I had observed that this prisoner never made any noise; did not so much as move his chair, nor even cough, etc. He went to mass on our days, descended the first, and returned upstairs after us. My mind being constantly intent on my scheme of escaping, I told my companion that I had a mind to take a view of the stranger's room at our return from mass; and I desired him to forward my wish, by putting his tweezer case in his handkerchief, and when we had regained the second story, to contrive, by pulling out his handkerchief, that the tweezer case should fall down the stairs to the greatest distance possible; and that he should desire the turnkey, who usually attended us, to

go and pick it up. This was no sooner proposed than done. Being foremost, I ran up without loss of time, drew back the bolt, and opened the door. I examined the height of the room, and found it could not be above ten feet. I shut the door again, and had leisure to measure one, two, and three steps of the staircase; I counted their number from that chamber to ours, and discovered a difference of about five feet. As the separation was not a stone arch, I readily perceived that it could not be five feet thick, and consequently must be double.

I then said to my companion, "Never despair! With a little patience and courage we may make our escape. Here is my estimate: there is a drum between the room on the third storey and ours."

Without looking at the paper I offered, he said, "Suppose all the drums of the army were there, how should they help us to escape?"

"We do not want the drums of the army; but if, as I think, there is a hollow to conceal my ropes and the other implements we shall have occasion for, I will engage that we shall succeed."

"But before we talk of hiding our ropes, we must have them; and you know that it is impossible to get ten feet."

"As to the ropes," said I, "give yourself no trouble about them, for in my trunk there is more than a thousand feet."

He looked at me very earnestly, and said, "Faith! I believe you have lost your senses; I know the contents of your portmanteau. I am certain there is not a foot of rope in it; and yet you tell me that it holds more than a thousand."

"Yes," I replied, "in that trunk are twelve dozen of shirts, six dozen pairs of silk stockings, twelve dozen pairs of under-stockings, five dozen drawers, and six dozen napkins. Now, by unravelling my shirts, stockings, napkins, and drawers, I shall have more than enough to make a thousand feet of rope."

"True," said he; "but how shall we remove the iron bars in our chimney? for we have no instruments to accomplish so great an undertaking."

"The hand is the instrument," I answered, "of all instruments; it is that which makes every one of them. Men whose heads are capable of working, are never at a loss for resources. Look at the iron hinges of our folding-table. I will put each into a handle, give it an edge by whetting it on the tiled floor of our apartment. We have a steel; by breaking it I will manufacture a good knife, in less than two hours, to make the handles; and the penknife will serve for a thousand other purposes."

As soon as we had supped, we pulled one hinge from our table; with that we took up a tile from our floor, and set about digging so successfully, that in six hours we performed it, and found that there were two floors three feet distant from each other. From this moment we considered our escape as a certainty. We replaced the tile, which had no appearance of having been removed. Next day I broke our steel, and made a penknife of it; and with this instrument we formed handles to the hinges of our table; we gave an edge to each. Then we unravelled two of our shirts, having ripped them to the hems, drawing out one thread after the other. We braided these strings together, made a certain number of clews of an equal length; and the clews being finished, we divided them in two, which formed two large bottoms; there were fifty threads in each bottom sixty feet long. We then twisted them, and formed a rope fifty-five feet long; and with the wood they brought us for firing made twenty rounds, which, connected by the rope, became a ladder twenty feet long.

At last we began the most difficult undertaking—the removal of the iron bars from the chimney. To accomplish this, we fastened our rope ladder with a weight to the end of it, and by means of the steps, supported ourselves while we displaced the bars. In a few months we loosened them all, but restored them to their places, ready to be removed at any time we wanted them. This was a troublesome piece of work. We never descended without bloody hands; and our bodies were so bruised in the chimney, that we could not renew our toil for an hour afterwards. This labour over, we wanted a wooden ladder of twenty feet, from the trench to reach the parapet, where the guards are posted, and that way to enter the governor's garden. Every day they gave us wood for firing, about twenty inches long. We still wanted blocks and many other things, and our two hinges were not fit for these purposes, much less to saw billets. In a few hours, with the other fragment of the steel, I made an excellent saw from an iron candlestick. With the penknife, the hinges, and the saw, we began to shape and smooth our billets, to make at each end a kind of joint or mortice, and tenons to fix in one another, with two holes, one to receive a round, and one a peg, to prevent their shaking; and as fast as we finished a part of our ladder, we concealed it between the two floors. With these implements we made a pair of compasses, a square, a reel, blocks, steps, etc.

As the officers and turnkeys often entered our apartment in the daytime, when we least expected them, we were obliged not



only to hide our tools, but the smallest chips and rubbish that we made, the least of which would have betrayed us. We had likewise given each of them a private name; for instance, we called the saw Faunus, the reel Anubis, the hinges Tubal Cain, the drum Polyphemus, in allusion to the fabulous grotto, the wooden ladder Jacob, the steps suckers, a rope, a dove, etc. When any person was coming in, he who was next to the door said to the other, Tubal Cain, Faunus, Anubis, dove, etc., and the other drew his handkerchief over what was to be concealed, or removed it; for we were always on our guard.

Not having materials sufficient to form two sides to our wooden ladder, it had only one pole twenty feet long, in which were inserted twenty rounds, fifteen inches long, that projected from the pole six inches on each side; and every round with its peg was fastened with packthread, so that it was impossible to slip in using it by night. When this ladder was finished, we hid it in Polyphemus, that is, in the hollow of the floor; we then set to work about the ropes of the great ladder, which was to be one hundred and eighty feet long. We unravelled our shirts, napkins, stockings, drawers, etc. As fast as we made a clew of a certain length, we hid it in Polyphemus; and when we had completed a sufficient number in one night, we twisted our capital rope.

All round the Bastille is an entablature, which projects three or four feet. We were convinced that at every step of our descent the ladder would vibrate from side to side, and at those intervals the steadiest head might be overpowered. To prevent either of us from being crushed by a fall, we made a second rope three hundred and sixty feet long, or twice the measure of the height of the tower. This rope was to pass through a kind of fixed pulley, that there might be no danger of its sticking between the sides and iron box of the latter; and thus either of us, whether above or below the tower, by means of this cord, might sustain his comrade in the air, and prevent his descending too fast. Besides these, we made shorter cords, to fasten our rope ladder and our block to a piece of cannon, and for other unforeseen exigencies. When these cords were all ready, their measure was four hundred feet. We had still to make two hundred steps for the great ladder and the wooden one; and to prevent the steps of the rope ladder from rustling against the wall as we descended, we covered them with the linings of our bed-gowns, under-waistcoats, etc. These preparations cost us eighteen months' work, night and day.

I have described the requisites we needed to get through our

chimney on the platform of the Bastille, to descend thence into the trench, to get up the parapet, and enter the governor's garden, to descend again by means of our wooden ladder, or another, into the great trench by the gate of St. Anthony, the spot that was to bless us with our liberty. We required, besides, a dark, stormy night: yet a dreadful evil might intervene; it might happen to rain from five in the evening till nine or ten, and then the weather might become fair. In that case, the sentinels walking round the Bastille from one post to another would see us, and not only all our toil would be lost, but instead of receiving consolation, we should be sent to the dungeon, and while the marchioness continued in power, be watched with additional rigour. We were much alarmed with the apprehension of this danger; but by reflecting on it, I discovered the means of its removal. I informed my companion, that since the building of this wall, the Seine had overflowed at least three hundred times; that its waters must have dissolved the salts contained in the mortar, the depth of half an inch every time, and that consequently it would be easy for us to perforate a hole in it, by which we might escape with less hazard. In order to obtain a gimlet, we could draw a screw out of our bedstead, to which we would fix a good cross handle; and with it might make some holes in the joining of the stones, to stick in them our iron bars, by which we might remove more than five tons weight with the purchase of the lever; and so might easily pierce the wall that separates the trench of the Bastille from that of St. Anthony's gate. There would be a thousand times less risk in issuing by this method, than by getting out on the parapet, and passing under the very noses of the sentinels, etc. M. D'Alegre agreed to this, and said, that should we be foiled in this perforation, it would be still less hazardous than to scale a corner of the wall, as we had heretofore intended, by the parapet,—a resource that would be left us should our other attempt be frustrated by insurmountable obstacles. Accordingly, we made wrappers for our iron bars, we drew out the bed screw and made a gimlet of it; in short, when our apparatus was ready, though the river had overflowed, and the water was three or four feet deep in each trench, we resolved to depart the next evening, February 25. 1756.

Besides my trunk, I had a large leathern portmanteau; and not questioning that all the clothes on our backs would be soaked by working in the water, we filled this portmanteau with a complete suit, not omitting the best of every article left us. Next day, as soon as we had dined, we fitted up our great ladder, with its

flight of steps, and then hid it under our beds, that it might not be discovered by the turnkey when he brought our supper. We next adjusted our wooden ladder, then made up the rest into several bundles, being free from the apprehension of any visit till the usual hour of five. The two iron bars for which we had occasion were pulled down, and put into their wrappers, both to prevent a noise and that we might handle them more conveniently. We had provided a bottle of usquebaugh, to keep us warm and recruit our strength, should we be obliged to work in the water. This proved a very necessary precaution, for without the assistance of that liquor we should never have been able to stand up to the neck in the wet for six hours.

The critical moment now arrived. Our supper was scarcely brought, when, in spite of a rheumatic pain in my left arm, I set about climbing up the chimney, and had a hard struggle to reach the top. I was almost smothered with the soot, not being aware that chimney-sweepers arm their elbows and loins with defensives, and put a sack over their heads to secure them from the dust; my elbows and knees were accordingly flayed; the blood streaming from my elbows to my hands, and from my knees down my legs. At last I got to the top of the chimney, where I placed myself astride, and thence unwound a ball of pack thread, to the end of which my companion had agreed to fasten the strongest rope that held my portmanteau; by this I drew it up and lowered it on the platform. I returned the rope, to which my companion tied the wooden ladder. I drew it up; in the same manner the two iron bars and the rest of our parcels. When I had these, I again let down my packthread to raise the rope ladder, drawing up the superfluous length, that by the end my companion might mount the chimney with more facility than I had done; and at his signal I fastened it. He ascended with ease; we finished drawing up the remainder, and hung the whole in such a manner across the chimney, that we descended both at once on the platform, serving for a counterpoise to each other.

Two horses would not have been able to remove all our luggage. We began with rolling up our rope ladder, which made a volume five feet high and a foot thick, and we wheeled this kind of mill-stone on the tower of the treasury, which we thought most favourable for our descent. We fastened this ladder securely to a piece of cannon, and then let it gently down into the trench. In the same manner we fastened our block, passing through it the rope three hundred and sixty feet long; and when we had moved

aside all our other parcels, I tied my thigh securely to the rope of the block, got on the ladder, and in proportion as I descended its steps, my comrade let out the rope of the block; but, notwithstanding this precaution, every time I moved my body resembled a kite dancing in the air, so that, had this happened by daylight, of a thousand persons who might have seen me reeling, not one but would have given me over for lost; yet I arrived safe in the trench.

Immediately my companion lowered my portmanteau, the iron bars, the wooden ladder, and all our equipage, which I placed high and dry on a little rising above the surface of the water at the foot of the tower. He next fastened the rope of the block at the other end above his knee, and, when he had given me a signal, I performed the same manœuvre below which he had done for me above, to sustain me in the air and prevent a fall. I took the further precaution to place the last step under my thighs by sitting on it, to spare him the disagreeable vibration which I had experienced. He got down to me, though, during the whole time, the sentinel could not be above thirty feet from us, walking on the corridor, as it did not rain; which prevented our mounting thither to get into the garden according to our first plan. We were therefore obliged to make use of our iron bars; I took one of them, with the gimlet, on my shoulder, and my companion the other. We proceeded directly to the wall that parts the trench of the Bastille from that of St. Anthony's gate, between the garden and the governor's house. There was in this place a small trench six feet wide and about four feet deep, which wetted us up to the armpits.

At the moment that I began with my gimlet to bore a hole between two stones to insert our levers, the major's round passed us with the great lantern, but twelve feet at most over our heads. To conceal ourselves we stood up to the chin in water, and when it was gone I soon made two or three small holes with my gimlet; and in a short time we got a large stone out. We then attacked a second and a third stone. The second watch passed us, and we again slipped into the water up to our chins. We were obliged to perform this ceremony regularly every half-hour that we were disturbed by the watch. Before midnight we had displaced two wheelbarrows of stones; and in a few hours had made a breach in the wall, which is four feet and a half thick. I immediately bade D'Alegre go out and wait for me on the other side, and should I meet with any misfortune in fetching the portmanteau, to flee at the least noise. Thanks to heaven! I got it without any

disaster; he drew it out; I followed, and gladly left the rest of our luggage behind us.

In the trench of St. Anthony's gate we thought ourselves out of danger; he held one end of my portmanteau, and I the other, taking the way to Bercy. We had scarcely advanced fifty steps when we fell into the aqueduct in the middle of that great trench, with at least six feet of water over our heads. My companion, instead of gaining the other side, for the aqueduct is not six feet wide, dropped the portmanteau to hang on me. Thus dangerously entangled, with a jerk I made him let go his hold, clinging at the same moment to the opposite side, and plunging my arm in the water, drew him towards me by the hair of his head, and afterwards my portmanteau, which floated on the surface. We were not till now out of danger. Here ended the horrors of that dreadful night. As the trench formed a declivity, thirty paces from thence we were on dry ground. Then we embraced each other, and fell on our knees to thank God for the great mercy He had bestowed on us, that neither of us had been dashed to pieces in the fall, and that He had restored us to liberty. Our rope ladder was so exact as not to be a foot too long or too short; every part of it was so well disposed that not an inch was out of its place. All the clothes on our backs were thoroughly soaked; but we were provided for this inconvenience by those in my portmanteau, which being well covered at top with dirty linen, and carefully packed, were not injured by a drop of water. Our hands were galled by drawing out the stones to form a breach; and what may be thought surprising is, that we were less cold up to the neck in water than on dry ground, when a universal tremor seized us, and we almost lost the use of our hands. I was obliged to be my friend's *valet de chambre*, and he in return mine. As we mounted the slope it struck four o'clock. We took the first hackney coach, and went to the house of M. Silhouette, chancellor of the Duke of Orleans; but as unluckily he was at Versailles, we flew for refuge to the Abbey of St. Germain-des-prez.

To gain strength after their toils, as well as to let the hue and cry die away, the friends remained nearly a month in concealment. It having been settled between them, that in order to avoid being both caught at once, they should quit the country separately. D'Alegre, in the disguise of a peasant, set out on his journey to Brussels. He reached that city in safety and informed Larude of his success. Furnished with a parish register of his host, who

was nearly of his own age, and with some old papers relative to a lawsuit, and dressed as a servant, Latude departed. He went on foot a few leagues from Paris, and then took the diligence for Valenciennes. He was several times stopped, searched, and questioned, and on one occasion was in imminent danger of being detected. By dint, however, of sticking to his story, that he was carrying law papers to his master's brother at Amsterdam, he got safely to Valenciennes, at which town he removed into the stage for Brussels. He was walking when they reached the boundary post which marks the frontier line of France and the Netherlands. "My feelings," said he, "got the better of my prudence; I threw myself on the ground, and kissed it with transport. At length, thought I, I can breathe without fear! My companions, with astonishment, demanded the cause of this extravagance. I pretended that just at the very moment in a preceeding year I had escaped a great danger, and that I always expressed my gratitude to Providence by a similar prostration when the day came round."

Latude had appointed D'Alegre to meet him at the Hotel de Coffi, in Brussels. Thither he went immediately on his arrival; but there disappointment and sorrow awaited him. The landlord at first denied any knowledge of D'Alegre, and when further pressed he hesitated, and became extremely embarrassed. This was enough to convince the inquirer that his friend had been seized; and the conviction was strengthened by his having heard nothing from him, though D'Alegre knew the moment when his companion would reach Brussels. As his friend could be arrested on the Austrian territory, it was obvious that Latude could not remain in it without danger; and with a heavy heart, he resolved to fly instantly from this inhospitable soil. He secured a place in the canal boat, which was that night to proceed to Antwerp. In the course of the voyage, he learned the fatal truth from a fellow-passenger. He was told that one of the two prisoners escaped from the Bastille had arrived at the Hotel de Coffi, had been apprehended by a police officer, and had been ultimately sent under a strong escort to Lille, and there delivered into the custody of a French exempt; and, moreover, that all this was kept as secret as possible, in order not to alarm the other fugitive, the search after whom was carried on with such activity, that he must inevitably fall into the hands of his pursuers.

Believing that if he went on immediately to Amsterdam, he would find there an officer of the police waiting to seize him, he directed his steps to Bergen-op-Zoom. But now another trouble fell  
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upon him. He had nearly exhausted his scanty stock of money, and had not found at Brussels a remittance which he expected from his father; he afterwards learned that it had been intercepted by the French exempt who was employed to trace him. While he remained at Bergen-op-Zoom, which was till he supposed that his enemies would have lost the hope of his coming to Amsterdam, he wrote to his father for a supply. But a considerable time must elapse before he could receive it, and in the meanwhile he would run the risk of starving. When he had paid the rent of his wretched garret at Bergen-op-Zoom, and the fare of the boat which was to convey him to Amsterdam, a few shillings was all that was left. In this state of penury, unwilling to beg, he tried whether life could be supported by grass and wild herbs alone. The experiment failed, for his stomach rejected the loathsome food. To render his herbs less disgusting, he bought four pounds of black and clay-like rye bread to eat with them.

Hoping that by this time the bloodhounds of the marchioness had desisted from seeking him in the Dutch capital, Latude ventured to embark. To hide his poverty, he kept aloof as much as possible from his fellow-voyagers. He was, however, not unobserved. There was in the boat one John Teerhost, who kept a sort of humble public-house, in a cellar at Amsterdam. Under his unprepossessing exterior he had a heart as kind as ever beat in a human breast. Chancing to catch a sight of Latude's sorry fare, he could not help exclaiming, "I declare! what an extraordinary dinner you are making! You seem to have more appetite than money!" Latude frankly owned it was so. The good-natured Dutchman immediately led him to his own table. "No compliments, Mr. Frenchman," said he; "seat yourself there, and eat and drink with me." On further acquaintance with him, Latude discovered that his host was not only a truly benevolent man, but that he had also the rare talent of conferring favours with such delicacy, as not to wound the feelings of the person whom he obliged.

When they reached Amsterdam, Teerhost offered to introduce him to a Frenchman named Martin, who, judging from himself, he doubted not would be delighted to serve him. Latude, however, found that his fellow-countryman was one of the most soulless persons whom he had ever seen; a being who cared only for self. He was better fitted to be a turnkey of the Bastille than the consoler of one of its victims. The tears and low spirits of his guest disclosed to the Dutchman the reception which Latude had met with, and the foreboding that oppressed him. Taking his hand,

he said, "Do not weep; I will never abandon you. I am not rich, it is true, but my heart is good; we will do the best we can for you, and you will be satisfied."

Teerhost's underground habitation was divided by a partition into two rooms, one of which served as kitchen, while the other was at once shop, sitting-room, and bedroom. Though the narrow tenement was already crowded, Teerhost contrived to make a sleeping-place for Latude in a large closet, and he and his wife cheerfully gave him a mattress from their own bed. Not content with feeding and lodging the fugitive, Teerhost strove to divert him from melancholy thoughts, by taking him wherever there was anything that could amuse him. His charitable efforts were but partially successful; for the mind of Latude was deeply saddened by his own precarious situation, and still more by his incessantly brooding over and regretting the fate of D'Alegré.

Though Latude had found no sympathy in Martin, he was more fortunate in another of his countrymen, Louis Clergue, a native of Martagnac, where the fugitive was born. Rich and compassionate, Clergue gave Latude a room in his house, made him a constant partaker of his table, and furnished him with clothes and linen. The linen was not the least acceptable of these gifts, for Latude had been forty days without a change of it. Clergue also assembled his friends to hear the story of his guest, and to consult what could be done for him. They were all of opinion that Latude had nothing to fear, as neither the States-General nor the people of Amsterdam would ever consent to deliver up a persecuted stranger, who had confidently thrown himself on their protection. Even Latude himself began to believe that at last he was safe. The unfortunate man was soon woefully undeceived. Not for a moment had his pursuers slackened in the chase; not a single precaution had they neglected that could lead to success. In aid of the subaltern agents, the French ambassador had also exerted himself. By representing the fugitive as a desperate malefactor, he had obtained the consent of the States to arrest him. Calumny was one of the weapons uniformly employed against prisoners, in order to insulate them from their fellow-creatures, by extinguishing pity. But in this instance, there seems reason for believing that bribery was an auxiliary to calumny. The expense of following up the fugitive was no less than nine thousand pounds sterling, a sum for which it is impossible to account, without supposing that much of it was expended in bribes.

Though Latude had changed his name, and the address to



which his friends were to direct their communications, the active agents of the marchioness had succeeded in intercepting all his letters. One was at last allowed to reach him, as the means of effecting his ruin. It does not appear whether his residing in the house of M. Clergue was known to them; probably it was; but if it were, they perhaps thought that it would be imprudent to seize him there, as his protector might proclaim to the populace the innocence of his guest, and thus excite a tumult. A letter from Latude's father, containing a draft on a banker, was therefore forwarded to him. Into this snare he fell. As he was proceeding to the banker's, the Dutch police officers pounced upon him, and he was immediately fettered and dragged along. The crowd which had quickly gathered were told that he was a dangerous criminal; but as the numbers nevertheless continued to increase, the brutal officers, who were armed with heavy bludgeons, dealt their blows liberally on all sides, to clear the way to the town hall. One of these blows struck the prisoner with such violence on the nape of the neck, that he dropped senseless to the ground.

When consciousness returned, he was lying on a truss of straw in a dungeon; there was not a ray of light visible, not a sound to be heard. He seemed to be cut off from the human race, and he resigned himself wholly to despair. His tumultuous reflections were interrupted in the morning by a visit from St. Marc, the French exempt, who had pursued him from Paris. This brutal caittiff had the baseness to aggravate his sufferings by an awkward attempt at irony. "He told me," says Latude, "that I ought to pronounce the name of the Marchioness de Pompadour with the most profound respect; she was anxious only to load me with favours; far from complaining, I ought to kiss the generous hand that struck me, every blow from which was a compliment and an obligation." In a second visit some time after, the exempt brought him an ounce of snuff, which he strongly recommended, but which Latude did not use, because he imagined, and not unreasonably, that it was poisoned. Latude remained nine days in this dungeon, while his captors were waiting for permission to carry him through the territory of the Empress Maria Theresa. They were anxious to receive it without delay, for M. Clergue and the other friends of the prisoner were loudly asserting his innocence; and the citizens began to murmur at the disgrace which was cast upon their country by his seizure being permitted. The permission soon came, and the myrmidons of the marchioness hastened to bear off their prey. In this instance the Dutch and

Austrian governments must bear the shame of having been ready instruments of the persecutors. It is, however, doubtful whether, had those governments acted otherwise, the fugitives would have escaped. To effect their purpose, the emissaries of the Bastille did not scruple to violate the territory of foreign powers. In 1752, M. Bertin de Fretaux was carried off from England. He was secretly seized at Marylebone, put on board ship at Gravesend, and conveyed to the Bastille, where he died after having been confined for twenty-seven years. Even foreign subjects were not safe. The publisher of a Leyden Gazette having printed a satire on Louis XIV, he was kidnapped in Holland, conveyed to the rock of St. Michael on the Norman coast, and shut up in a cage till he died.

At two in the morning, on June 9, 1756, the jailers of Latude came to remove him. Round his body they fastened a strong leathern belt, on which were two large rings fastened by padlocks. Through these rings his hands were passed, so that his arms were pinioned down to his sides without the power of motion. He was then conveyed to a boat, into the foulest corner of which he was thrown. As he could not feed himself, the office of feeding him was committed to two men; they were so horribly filthy, that he refused for four-and-twenty hours to take nourishment from them. Force was then employed to make him eat. They brought him a piece of beef swimming in gravy; they took the meat in their hands, and thrust it into his mouth; they then took some bread which they steeped in the grease, and made him swallow it in a similar manner.

The mode of confinement by the belt was absolute torture to the prisoner. At length, thanks to the compassionate interference of a servant on board, who declared that if no one else would, he would himself cut it, the belt was removed, and Latude was indulged by being only handcuffed on the right arm, and chained to one of his guards. When they arrived at Lille, St. Marc halted for the night, and sent the prisoner to the town jail, where he was bolted to the chain of a deserter, scarcely nineteen, who had been told that he was to be hanged on the morrow. The despairing youth spent the night in trying to convince him that he, too, would be hanged, and in proposing that they should elude a public execution by strangling themselves with their shirts. For the remainder of the journey, Latude, with his legs ironed, travelled in a carriage with St. Marc, who took the precaution of carrying pistols, and had likewise an armed servant by the side of the vehicle, whose orders were to shoot the captive if he made the slightest motion.

By his associates at the Bastille, St. Marc was received like some victor returning from the scene of his triumph. They swarmed round him, listened with greedy ears to the tale of his exertions and stratagems, and lavished praises and attentions upon him. The group must have borne no very distant resemblance to fiends exulting over a lost soul. Stripped, and re-clothed in rags which were dropping to pieces, his hands and feet heavily ironed, the prisoner was thrown into one of the most noisome dungeons of the fortress. A sprinkling of straw formed his bed; covering it had none. The only light and air which penetrated into this den of torment came through a loophole, which, narrowing gradually from the inside to the outside, had a diameter of not more than five inches at the farthest extremity. This loophole was secured and darkened by a fourfold iron grating, so ingeniously contrived that the bars of one network covered the interstices of another; but there was neither glass nor shutters to ward off the inclemency of the weather. The interior extremity of this aperture reached within about two feet and a half of the ground, and served the captive for a chair and a table; and sometimes he rested his arms and elbows on it to lighten the weight of his fetters.

Shut out from all communication with his fellow beings, Latude found some amusement in the society of the rats which infested his dungeon. His first attempt to make them companionable was tried upon a single rat, which in three days, by gently throwing bits of bread to it, he rendered so tame, that it would take food from his hands. The animal even changed its abode, and established itself in another hole in order to be nearer him. In a few days a female joined the first comer. At the outset she was timid; but it was not long before she acquired boldness, and would quarrel and fight for the morsels which were given by the prisoner.

"When my dinner was brought in," says Latude, "I called my companions. The male ran to me directly; the female, according to custom, came slowly and timidly, but at length approached close to me, and ventured to take what I offered her from my hand. Some time after, a third appeared, who was much less ceremonious than my first acquaintances. After his second visit, he constituted himself one of the family, and made himself so perfectly at home, that he resolved to introduce his comrades. The next day he came accompanied by two others, who in the course of the week brought five more; and thus in less than a fortnight our family circle consisted of ten large rats and myself. I gave each of them names, which they learned to distinguish. When I called them, they

came to eat with me from the dish, or off the same plate; but I found this unpleasant, and was soon forced to find them a dish for themselves, on account of their slovenly habits. They became so tame that they allowed me to scratch their necks, and appeared pleased when I did so; but they would never permit me to touch them on the back. Sometimes I amused myself with making them play, and joining in their gambols. Occasionally I threw them a piece of meat, scalding hot; the most eager ran to seize it, burned themselves, cried out, and left it; while the less greedy, who had waited patiently, took it when it was cold, and escaped into a corner, where they divided their prize. Sometimes I made them jump up by holding a piece of bread or meat suspended in the air." In the course of a year his four-footed companions increased to twenty-six. Whenever an intruder appeared he met with a hostile reception from the old standers, and had to fight his way before he could obtain a footing. Latude endeavoured to familiarize a spider, but in this he was unsuccessful.

Another source of comfort was unexpectedly opened to the solitary captive. Among the straw which was brought for his bed he found a piece of elder, and he conceived the idea of converting it into a sort of flageolet. This, however, was a task of no easy accomplishment, for his hands were fettered, and he had no tools. But necessity is proverbially inventive. He succeeded in getting off the buckle which fastened the waistband of his breeches, and bending it into a kind of chisel by means of his leg irons; and with this clumsy instrument, after the labour of many months, he contrived to form a rude kind of musical pipe. It was probably much inferior to a child's whistle, but his delight when he had completed it was extreme; the feeling was natural, and the sounds must have been absolute harmony to his ear. Though his flageolet and his animal companions made his lonely hours somewhat less burdensome, and at moments drew his attention wholly from maddening thoughts, the longing for liberty would perpetually recur, and he racked his mind for plans to shake off his chains. The thought occurred to him, that if he could be fortunate enough to suggest some plan which would benefit the state, it might be repaid by the gift of freedom. At that time the non-commissioned military officers were armed only with halberds, which could be of no use but in close engagement. Latude proposed to substitute muskets for the halberds, and thus make effective at least twenty thousand men. But how was he to communicate his idea to the king and the ministers? He had neither pen, ink, nor paper;

and strict orders had been given that he should be debarred from the use of them. This obstacle, however, he got over. For paper he moulded thin tablets of bread, six inches square; for pens he used the triangular bones out of a carp's belly; for ink his blood was substituted; to obtain it he tied round a finger some threads from his shirt, and punctured the end. As only a few drops could be procured in this way, and as they dried up rapidly, he was compelled to repeat the operation so often that his fingers were covered with wounds, and enormously swelled. The necessity of frequent punctures he ultimately obviated, by diluting the blood with water.

When the memorial was finished, there was yet another difficulty to be surmounted; it must be copied. In this emergency, Latude clamorously demanded to see the major of the Bastille. To that officer he declared, that being convinced he had not long to live, he wished to prepare for his end by receiving religious assistance. The confessor of the prison was in consequence sent to him, was astonished and delighted by the memorial, became interested in his favour, and obtained an order that he should be supplied with materials for writing. The memorial was accordingly transcribed, and presented to the king.

The suggestion was adopted by the government; the unfortunate prisoner was, however, left to languish unnoticed in his dungeon. Again he tasked his faculties for a project which might benefit at once his country and himself. At this period no provision was made in France for the widows of those who fell in battle. The king of Prussia had recently set the example of granting pensions, and Latude deemed it worthy of being imitated. But knowing that an empty treasury would be pleaded against its adoption, he proposed a trifling addition to the postage of letters, which he calculated would raise an ample fund. His memorial, and the data on which it was founded, were forwarded to the monarch and the ministers. The tax was soon after imposed, and nominally for the purpose pointed out by Latude; but the widows, nevertheless, continued to be destitute, and the projector unpitied.

Foiled in all his efforts, the firmness of Latude gave way. He had been pent for three years and five months in a loathsome dungeon, suffering more than pen can describe. Exposed in his horrible, fireless, and windowless abode to all the blasts of heaven, three winters, one of which was peculiarly severe, had sorely tortured his frame. The cold, the keen winds, and a continual

defluxion from his nostrils, had split his upper lip and destroyed his front teeth; his eyes were endangered from the same causes, and from frequent weeping; his head was often suddenly affected by a sort of apoplectic stroke; and his limbs were racked by cramp and rheumatism. Hope was extinct; intense agony of mind and body rendered existence insufferable; and the unhappy victim resolved to throw off a burden which he could no longer bear. No instrument of destruction being within reach, he tried to effect his purpose by starving himself; and for a hundred and thirty-three hours he obstinately persisted in refusing all food. At last his jailers wrenched open his mouth, and frustrated his design. Still bent on dying, he contrived to obtain and secrete a fragment of broken glass, with which he opened four of the large veins. During the night he bled till life was all but extinct. Once more, however, he was snatched from the grave; and he now sullenly resigned himself to await his appointed time.

After he had been confined a considerable time longer, a fortunate overflowing of the Seine occasioned his removal. The turnkey complained heavily that he was obliged to walk through the water to the prisoner, and Latude was in consequence removed to an apartment in the tower of La Comte. It had no chimney, and was one of the worst rooms in the tower, but it was a paradise when compared with the pestiferous hole from which he had emerged. Yet so strong is the yearning for society, that, gladdened as he was by his removal, he could not help bitterly regretting the loss of his sociable rats. As a substitute for them, he tried to catch some of the pigeons which perched on the window; and by means of a noose formed from threads drawn out of his linen, he finally succeeded in snaring a male and female. He tried every means to console them for the loss of liberty. He assisted them to make their nest and to feed their young; his care and attention equalled their own. They seemed sensible of this and repaid him by every possible mark of affection. As soon as this reciprocal understanding had been established, he occupied himself entirely with them. How he watched their actions, and enjoyed their expressions of tenderness! He lost himself entirely while with them, and in his dreams continued the enjoyment.

This pleasure was too great to be lasting. He had been placed in his present apartment because it was under the care of a brutal turnkey, named Daragon, who had been punished for Latude's former escape, and cherished a rankling feeling of revenge. It was Daragon who purchased the grain for the pigeons, and for

this service the prisoner, besides the large profit which the turnkey made, gave him one out of the seven bottles of wine which was his weekly allowance. Daragon now insisted on having four bottles, without which he would purchase no more grain. It was to no purpose that Latude pleaded that the wine was indispensably necessary to restore his health; the turnkey was deaf to reason. Latude was provoked into asperity; Daragon rushed out in a rage, and in a short time he returned, pretending that he had an order from the governor to kill the pigeons. "My despair at this," says Latude, "exceeded all bounds, and absolutely unsettled my reason; I could willingly have sacrificed my life to satisfy my just vengeance on this monster. I saw him make a motion towards the innocent victims of my misfortunes; I sprang forward to prevent him. I seized them, and in my agony I crushed them myself. This was perhaps the most miserable moment of my whole existence. I never recall the memory of it without the bitterest pangs. I remained several days without taking any nourishment; grief and indignation divided my soul; my sighs were imprecation, and I held all mankind in mortal horror."

Fortunately, a humane and generous man, the Count de Jumilhac, was, soon after, appointed governor of the Bastille. He compassionated the sufferings of Latude, and exerted himself to relieve them. He obtained for him an interview with M. de Sartine, the minister of police, who gave him leave to walk for two hours daily on the platform of the Bastille, and promised to befriend him. That promise he soon broke. Hope revived in the breast of Latude, and he again set to work to form plans for the good of the country. Schemes for issuing a new species of currency, and for establishing public granaries in all the principal towns, were among the first fruits of his meditations. With respect to the latter project, he says, "Nothing could be more simple than the mode I suggested of constructing and provisioning these magazines. It consisted in a slight duty upon marriage, which all rich people, or those who wished to appear so, would have paid with eagerness, as I had the address to found it upon their vanity." This project pleased M. de Sartine so much, that he wished to have the merit of it to himself, and by means of a third person he sounded Latude, to know whether he would relinquish his claim to it on having a small pension secured to him. Latude gave a brief but peremptory refusal, and M. de Sartine was thenceforth his enemy. All letters and messages to him remained unnoticed.

While he was one day walking on the platform, he learned the

death of his father. The sentinel who guarded him had served under his father, but did not know that the prisoner was the son of his old officer. Latude was overwhelmed by this fatal intelligence, and he fainted on the spot. His mother still lived; but she, too, was sinking into the grave from grief. It was in vain that in the most pathetic language she repeatedly implored the marchioness to have mercy on the captive. Her prayers might have moved a heart of flint, but they had no effect on Madame de Pompadour. But the horrors of imprisonment were not enough to be inflicted on him; he was made the victim of calumny, and a stain was fixed upon his character. To get rid of importunity in his behalf, the men in office replied to his advocates, "Beware how you solicit the pardon of that miscreant. You would shudder if you knew the crimes he has committed."

Thus goaded almost to madness, it is not to be wondered at that he was eager to take vengeance on his persecutors. Since the heart of Madame de Pompadour was inaccessible to pity, he determined that it should at least feel the stings of mortification and rage. His plan was to draw up a memorial, exposing her character, and to address it to La Beaumelle, who had himself tasted the rigours of the Bastille. He had only to place in trusty hands the true history of her birth and infamous life, with all the particulars of which he was well acquainted. In depriving him of existence she would dread his dying words, and even from the tomb he would still be an object of terror to her. There was nothing then to restrain the blow with which he had the power of crushing her. The faithful friends who were to become the depositaries of his vengeance, in apprising her of the danger, would merely give her a single moment to escape it by doing him justice.

It was while he was walking on the platform of the Bastille that he formed this chimerical project; for chimerical it was, there being scarcely a probability that any one would have courage enough to second his attack on the potent and vindictive marchioness. Having calculated the distance between the top of the tower and the street of St. Anthony, on which he looked down, he perceived to fling a packet into the street. Nothing of this kind could, however, be done while he was closely watched by Falconet, the aid-major, and a sergeant, both of whom always attended him in his walk. Falconet was insufferably garrulous, particularly in his own exploits, and Latude hoped to disgust him by perpetual sarcasm and contradiction. He succeeded in silencing him, but Falconet still clung to him like his shadow. To tire him out,



Latude adopted the plan of almost running during the whole of the time that he was on the platform. The aid-major remonstrated, but the prisoner answered that rapid motion was indispensably necessary to him, in order to excite perspiration. At last Falconet suffered him to move about as he pleased, and fell into gossiping with the sergeant, in which they both engaged so deeply that Latude was left unnoticed.

The next step of Latude was to gaze into the windows of the opposite houses, and scrutinize the faces of the persons whom he saw, till he could see some one whose countenance seemed indicative of humane feelings. It was on the female sex, as having more sensibility than the male, that he mainly relied for pity and succour; and his attention was finally fixed on two young women, who were sitting by themselves at work in a chamber, and whose looks appeared to betoken that they were of kind dispositions. Having caught the eye of one of them, he respectfully saluted her by a motion of his hand; the sign was answered by both of them in a similar manner. After this dumb intercourse had continued for some days, he showed them a packet, and they motioned to him to fling it; but he gave them to understand that it was not yet ready.

The means of conveyance for his intended work were now secured; but as he no longer had materials for writing, he had still much to contrive. But he was not of a nature to be discouraged even by serious obstacles. He had fortunately been allowed to purchase some books, and he resolved to write between the lines and on the margins of the pages. As a pen made of a carp bone would not write a sufficiently small hand for interlineations, he beat a copper coin as thin as paper, and succeeded in shaping it into a tolerable pen. Ink was yet to be provided, and this was the worst task of all to accomplish. Having on the former occasion narrowly escaped gangrene in his fingers, he was afraid to use blood, and was therefore compelled to find a substitute. To make this ink of lamp-black was the mode which occurred to him; but as he was allowed neither fire nor candle, how was the black to be obtained? By a series of stratagems he managed to surmount the difficulty. Under pretence of severe toothache, he borrowed from the sergeant who attended him on the platform, a pipe and the articles for lighting it, and he secreted a piece of the tinder. By a simulated fit of colic he got some oil from the doctor. This he put into a pomatum pot, and made a wick from threads drawn out of the sheets. He then made a bow and peg like a drill, and with this and the piece of tinder, by dint of rapid friction he ignited two

small bits of dry wood, and lighted his lamp. The first view of the light threw him, he says, into a delirium of joy. The condensed smoke he collected on the bottom of a plate, and in six hours he had sufficient for his purpose. But here he was stopped short; and all his trouble seemed likely to be thrown away, for the light and oily black floated on the water instead of mixing with it. He got over this by affecting to have a violent cold. The prison apothecary sent him some syrup, and Latude employed it to render the lamp-black miscible with water.

Thus provided with materials for writing, Latude sat down to compose his work. "My whole heart and soul were in it," says he, "and I steeped my pen in the gall with which they were overflowing." Having completed the history of his persecutor, he wrote a letter of instructions to La Beaumelle, another to a friend, the Chevalier de Mehegan, in case of La Beaumelle being absent, and a third to his two female friends, in which he directed them how to proceed, and entreated them to exert themselves in his behalf. The whole of the papers he packed up in a leathern bag, which he formed out of the lining of a pair of breeches. As the packet was rather bulky, and the carrying of it about his person was dangerous, he was anxious to get rid of it as soon as possible. Some time, however, elapsed before he could catch sight of his friendly neighbours. At length one of them saw his signal, descended into the street, and caught the packet. Three months and a half passed away, during which he frequently saw them. They seemed to be pleased with something that related to him, but he was unable to comprehend their signs. At last, on April 18, 1764, they approached the window, and displayed a roll of paper, on which was written in large characters, "The Marchioness of Pompadour died yesterday."

"I thought I saw the heavens open before me!" exclaimed Latude. His oppressor was gone; and he felt an undoubting confidence that his liberation would immediately follow as a necessary consequence. He was cruelly undeceived. After some days had passed over, he wrote to the lieutenant of police, and claimed his freedom. Sartine had given strict orders to all the officers of the Bastille, to conceal the death of the marchioness, and he instantly hurried to the prison to discover how the news had reached Latude. He summoned the prisoner into his presence, and harshly questioned him on the subject. Latude perceived that a disclosure might be prejudicial to the kind females, and with equal firmness and honour he refused to make it. "The avowal,"

said Sartine, "is the price of your liberty." The captive, however, again declared that he would rather perish than purchase the blessing at such a cost. Finding him inflexible, the baffled lieutenant retired in anger. Irritated by repeated letters, petitions, and remonstrances being neglected, and having been led to fear that he was to be perpetually imprisoned to prevent him from suing Pompadour's heirs, Latude in an evil hour lost all command over himself, and wrote a violent epistle to Sartine, avowedly for the purpose of enraging him. This act of insane passion was punished by instant removal to one of the worst dungeons, where his fare was bread and water.

After Latude had been in this dungeon for eighteen days, M. de Sartine obtained an order to transfer him to Vincennes and immure him in an *oubliette*. Before he removed the prisoner, he circulated a report that he meant to deliver him, but that, to accustom him by degrees to a change of air, he was going to place him for a few months in a convent of monks. On the night of August 14, 1764, an officer of police, with two assistants, came to convey him to his new prison. "My keepers," he says, "fastened an iron chain round my neck, the end of which they placed under the bend of my knees; one of them placed one hand upon my mouth, and the other behind my head, whilst his companion pulled the chain with all his might, and completely bent me double. The pain I suffered was so intense that I thought my loins and spine were crushed; I have no doubt it equalled that endured by the wretch who is broken on the wheel. In this state I was conveyed from the Bastille to Vincennes." At Vincennes he was placed in a cell. His mind and body were now both overpowered by the severity of his fate; dangerous illness came on, and he every day grew weaker. Fortunately for Latude, M. Guyonnet, the governor of the fortress, had nothing of "the steeled jailer" about him; he was a generous, humane man, of amiable manners. He listened to the mournful tale of the captive, wept for his misfortunes, took on himself the responsibility of giving him a good apartment, and obtained for him the privilege of walking daily for two hours in the garden. Despairing, as well he might, of being ever released by his inflexible enemies, Latude meditated incessantly on the means of escaping. Fifteen months elapsed before an opportunity occurred, and then it was brought about by chance. He was walking in the garden on a November afternoon, when a thick fog suddenly came on. The idea of turning it to account rushed into his mind. He was guarded by two

sentries and a sergeant, who never quitted his side for an instant; but he determined to make a bold attempt. By a violent push of his elbows he threw off the sentries, then pushed down the sergeant, and darted past a third sentry, who did not perceive him till he was gone by. All four set up the cry of "Seize him!" and Latude joined in it still more loudly, pointing with his finger to mislead the pursuers. There remained only one sentry to elude, but he was on the alert, and unfortunately knew him. Presenting his bayonet, he threatened to kill the prisoner if he did not stop.

"My dear Chenu," said he to him, "you are incapable of such an action; your orders are to arrest, and not to kill me." He had slackened his pace, and came up to him slowly; as soon as he was close to him he sprang upon his musket, and wrenched it from him with such violence that he was thrown down in the struggle. Latude jumped over his body, flinging the musket to a distance of ten paces, lest he should fire it after him, and once more he achieved his liberty.

Favoured by the fog, Latude contrived to hide himself in the park till night, when he scaled the wall, and proceeded by byways to Paris. He sought a refuge with the two kind females to whom he had entrusted his packet. They were the daughters of a hair-dresser named Lebrun. The asylum for which he asked was granted in the kindest manner. They procured for him some linen and an apartment in the house, gave him fifteen livres which they had saved, and supplied him with food from all their own meals. The papers confided to them they had endeavoured, but in vain, to deliver to the persons for whom they were intended; two of those persons were absent from France; the third was recently married, and his wife, on hearing that the packet was from the Bastille, would not suffer her husband to receive it.

Latude was out of prison, but he was not out of danger. He was convinced that to whatever quarter he might bend his steps, it would be next to impossible to elude M. de Sartine, who by means of his spies was omnipresent. In this emergency he deemed it prudent to conciliate his persecutor; and he accordingly wrote a letter to him, entreating forgiveness for insults offered in a moment of madness, promising future silence and submission, and pathetically imploring him to become his protector. This overture had no result. He tried the influence of various persons, among whom was the Prince of Conti, but everywhere he was met by the prejudice which Sartine had raised against him; and to add to his alarm and vexation, he learned that a strict search was making

for him, and that a reward of a thousand crowns was offered for his apprehension. As a last resource, he determined to make a personal appeal to the Duke of Choiseul, the first minister, who was then with the court at Fontainebleau. It was mid-December when he set out, the ground was covered with ice and snow, and the cold was intense. A morsel of bread was his whole stock of provisions; he had no money, and he dared not approach a house, proceed on the high road, or travel by day, lest he should be intercepted. In his nightly circuitous journey of more than forty miles, he often fell into ditches, or tore himself in scrambling through the hedges. "I hid myself in a field," says he, "during the whole of the sixteenth; and after walking for two successive nights, I arrived on the morning of the seventeenth at Fontainebleau, worn out by fatigue, hunger, grief, and despair."

Latude was too soon convinced that there was no chance of escaping from the vengeance of M. de Sartine. As soon as he had announced his arrival to the duke, two officers of the police came to convey him, as they said, to the minister; but their mask was speedily thrown off, and he found that they were to escort him back to Vincennes. They told him that every road had been beset and every vehicle watched to discover him, and they expressed their wonder at his having been able to reach Fontainebleau undetected. "I now learned," says he, "for the first time, that there was no crime so great, or so severely punished, as a complaint against a minister. These exempts quoted to me the case of some deputies from the provinces, who, having been sent a short time before to denounce to the king the exactions of certain intendants, had been arrested and punished as dangerous incendiaries!"

On his reaching Vincennes, he was thrown into a horrible dungeon, barely six feet by six and a half in diameter, which was secured by four iron-plated treble-bolted doors, distant a foot from each other. To aggravate his misery, he was told that he deserved a thousand times worse treatment; for that he had been the cause of the sergeant who guarded him being hanged. This appalling news entirely overwhelmed him; he gave himself up to frantic despair, and incessantly accused himself as the murderer of the unfortunate man. In the course of a few days, however, a compassionate sentinel, who was moved by his cries and groans, relieved his heart by informing him that the sergeant was well, and had only been imprisoned.

The kind-hearted governor sometimes visited Latude, but the

information which he brought was not consolatory. He had tried to move M. de Sartine, and had found him inflexible. Sartine, however, sent to offer the prisoner his liberty, on condition that he would name the person who held his papers, and he pledged his honour that no harm should come to that person. Latude knew him too well to trust him. He resolutely answered, "I entered my dungeon an honest man, and I will die rather than leave it a dastard and a knave."

Into the den where he was, as it were, walled up, no ray of light entered; the air was never changed but at the moment when the turnkey opened the wicket; the straw on which he lay was always rotten with damp, and the narrowness of the space scarcely allowed him room to move. His health, of course, rapidly declined, and his body swelled enormously, retaining in every part of it when touched the impression of the finger. Such were his agonies, that he implored his keepers as an act of mercy to terminate his existence. At last, after having endured months of intense suffering, he was removed to a habitable apartment, where his strength gradually returned.

Though his situation was improved, he was still entirely secluded from society. Hopeless of escape, he pondered on the means of at least opening an intercourse with his fellow-prisoners. On the outer side of his chamber was the garden in which each of the prisoners, Latude alone being excluded, was daily allowed to walk by himself for a certain time. This wall was five feet thick; so that to penetrate it seemed almost as difficult as to escape. But what cannot time and perseverance accomplish! His only instruments were a broken piece of a sword and an iron hoop of a bucket, which he had contrived to secrete; yet with these, by dint of twenty-six months' labour, he managed to perforate the mass of stone. The hole was made in a dark corner of the chimney, and he stopped the interior opening with a plug formed of sand and plaster. A long wooden peg rather shorter than the hole was inserted into it, that, in case of the external opening being noticed and sounded, it might seem to be not more than three inches in depth. For a signal to the prisoner walking in the garden, he tied several pieces of wood so as to form a stick about six feet long, at the end of which hung a bit of riband. The twine with which it was tied, was made from threads drawn out of his linen. He thrust the stick through the hole, and succeeded in attracting the attention of a fellow-captive, the Baron de Venac, who had been nineteen years confined for having presumed to give

advice to Madame de Pompadour. He successively became acquainted with several others, two of whom were also the victims of the marchioness. One of them had been seventeen years in prison, on suspicion of having spoken ill of her; the other had been twenty-three years because he was suspected of having written against her a pamphlet, which he had never even seen. The prisoners contrived to convey ink and paper to Latude through the hole. He opened a correspondence with them, encouraged them to write to each other, and became the medium through which they transmitted their letters. The burden of captivity was much lightened to him by this new occupation.

An unfortunate change for the prisoner now took place. The benevolent and amiable-mannered Guyonnet was succeeded by Rougemont, a man who was a contrast to him in every respect. He was avaricious, flinty-hearted, brutal, and a devoted tool of M. de Sartine. The diet which he provided for the captives was of the worst kind; and their scanty comforts were as much as possible abridged. That he might not be thwarted in the exercise of his tyranny, he dismissed such of the prison attendants as he suspected of being humane, and replaced them by men whose dispositions harmonized with his own. How utterly devoid of feeling were the beings whom he selected, may be judged by the language of his cook. This libel on the human race is known to have said, "If the prisoners were ordered to be fed on straw, I would give them stable-litter;" and on other occasions he declared, "If I thought there was a single drop of juice in the meat of prisoners, I would trample it under my foot to squeeze it out!" Such a wretch would not have scrupled to put poison into the food, had not his master had an interest in keeping the prisoners alive. When any one complained of the provisions, he was insultingly answered, "It is far too good for prisoners;" when application for the use of an article, however insignificant, was made, the reply was, "It is contrary to the rules." So horrible was the despotism of the governor, that within three months four of the prisoners strangled themselves in despair. "The Inquisition itself," says Latude, "might envy his proficiency in torture!" Latude was one of the first to suffer from the brutality of Rougemont. The apartment in which Guyonnet had placed him commanded a fine view. The enjoyment of a prospect was thought to be too great a luxury for a prisoner, and accordingly Rougemont set about depriving him of it. He partly built up the windows, filled the interstices of the bars with close iron net-work; and then, lest a blade of

grass should still be visible, blockaded the outside with a blind like a mill-hopper, so that nothing could be perceived but a narrow strip of sky. But his situation was soon made far worse. In a fit of anger, caused by his being refused the means of writing to the lieutenant of police, he imprudently chanced to wish himself in his former cell again. He was taken at his word. On the following morning, when he had forgotten his unguarded speech, he was led back to his dark and noisome dungeon. "Few will believe," says he, "that such inhuman jests could be practised in a civilized country."

M. de Sartine, being now appointed minister of the marine, was replaced by M. le Noir. It was some time before Latude knew of this change, and he derived no benefit from it, the new head of the police being the friend of Sartine. He wished to address the minister, but the means were refused, and he again tasked his skill to remove the obstacle. The only light he enjoyed was when his food was brought to him. The turnkey then set down the lamp at the entrance of the wicket, and went away to attend to other business. Of the turnkey's short absence Latude availed himself to write a letter; it was written on a piece of his shirt, with a straw dipped in blood. His appeal was disregarded; and to prevent him from repeating it in the same manner, the governor ordered a socket for the candle to be fixed on the outside of the wicket, so that only a few feeble rays might penetrate into the dungeon. But the captive was not easily to be discouraged; and besides, he took a delight in baffling his persecutors. He had remaining in a pomatum pot some oil, sent by the surgeon to alleviate the colic pains which were caused by the dampness of his abode. Cotton drawn from his stockings supplied him with a wick. He then twisted some straw into a rope, which he coiled up and fastened in the shape of a bee-hive. With another portion of straw he made a sort of stick five feet long, with a bit of linen at the end of it. The turnkey was always obliged to bring his food twice; and while he was fetching the second portion, Latude thrust out the stick, obtaining a light from the candle, lighted his taper, and then closely covered it over with the bee-hive basket. When he was left by himself he unhooded the lamp, and wrote a second letter with his own blood. The only result was to make his jailers believe that he was aided by the prince of darkness.

It was not till Latude was again at death's door that he was removed from his dungeon. On being taken out he fainted, and remained for a long while insensible. When he came to himself



his mind wandered, and for some time he imagined that he had passed into the other world. Medical aid was granted to him, and he slowly recovered his health. The turnkeys now occasionally dropped obscure hints of some beneficial change, which he was at a loss to understand. The mystery was at length explained. The benevolent M. de Malesherbes had lately been appointed a cabinet minister, and one of his first acts was to inspect the state prisons. He saw Latude, listened to his mournful story, was indignant at his six-and-twenty years' captivity, and promised redress.

Latude had been more than eleven years at Vincennes when the order arrived for his release. His heart beat high with exultation; but he was doomed to suffer severe disappointment. At the moment when he imagined that he was free, an officer informed him that the minister thought it expedient to accustom him gradually to a purer air, and that he was therefore directed to convey him to a convent, where he was to remain for a few months. These were the very same words which had been spoken to him when he was sent from the Bastille to Vincennes; and knowing their meaning but too well, they almost palsied his faculties. His enemies had been busily at work. By gross misrepresentations, and by forging in his name an extravagant memorial to the king, they had induced M. de Malesherbes to believe that the prisoner's intellects were disordered, and that he could not be immediately released without peril. It was to the hospital of Charenton, the Parisian bedlam, that the officers were removing Latude. When he was about to quit Vincennes, he heard the brutal Rougemont describe him as a dangerous and hardened criminal, who could not be too rigorously confined. It was also hinted that the prisoner was gifted with magical powers, by virtue of which he had thrice escaped in an extraordinary manner. When he was turned over to the monks, called the Brothers of Charity, who had the management of Charenton, these particulars were faithfully reported to them, and he was introduced under the name of "Danger," in order to excite an idea of his formidable character.

Unacquainted with the nature of Charenton, Latude on seeing the monks had supposed that he was in a monastery. On finding that he was in a madhouse he dropped fainting to the ground. He was conducted to a cell which was over the vault where the furious lunatics were chained, and their shrieks and groans were horrible. In the night he heard the sound of voices, and discovered that two prisoners, one in the adjoining room and the other in that above, were talking about him out of their windows. They

were both of them state prisoners, the hospital being occasionally converted into a jail by the ministers; one was named St. Magloire, the other the Baron de Prilles. Latude introduced himself to them, and they promised him all the services in their power. De Prilles possessed considerable influence with the officers of the establishment, and he exerted it so effectually, that he obtained permission for Latude to be visited by his fellow-captives. He had, however, enjoyed this comfort only for a short time, when Rougemont came and gave orders for his being placed in close and solitary confinement.

Latude remained in seclusion for a considerable time; but at length, by dint of incessant remonstrances, de Prilles induced the superiors of the hospital to allow his new friend to take his meals in the apartment of St. Bernard, one of his fellow-prisoners. Another favour was soon after granted; he was permitted to take some exercise in the smaller court, when all the inmates of the place had been shut up for the night. It was then winter; and at eight o'clock the keeper led him to the court; and when he was not disposed to walk with him, he placed his lantern on a stone, and watched him through some holes purposely bored in the door.

Trifling as were these indulgences, the worthy monks had disobeyed positive orders in allowing them. But they did not stop here. The head of the hospital, Father Facio, was so deeply moved by the injustice done to the captive, that he waited on M. de Malesherbes to intercede for him. On his assuring the minister that the prisoner was submissive, docile, and perfectly sane, his hearer, who had been told that Latude was a furious madman, was astonished and indignant at having been deceived. He promised that he would speedily release him, and desired that he might in the meanwhile enjoy as much liberty as the hospital regulations would allow. Unfortunately, however, for Latude, Malesherbes very shortly after ceased to be one of the ministers.

Though he failed to obtain his freedom, the situation of Latude was much ameliorated; he might roam wherever he would within the bounds of the establishment. He derived additional comfort, from several of the state prisoners being now suffered to take their meals together, instead of having them separately in their apartments. The party thus formed admitted to their society several of the lunatics who had been liberally educated and were harmless. One of these unfortunate men asserted himself to be the Divinity, another claimed to be a son of Louis XV, a third took a higher flight, and was the reigning monarch. These aspiring

pretensions were strongly contrasted with the humility of others. A barrister, whose intellect love had shaken, manifested his insanity by throwing himself at everyone's feet and imploring pardon. Another individual, who had been a hermit, obstinately persisted in believing that Latude was a German elector; and in spite of all attempts to prevent it, would perform for him the meanest domestic offices. "If I told him in the morning," says Latude, "that a flea had disturbed my rest, he would not leave my chamber till he had killed it: he would bring it to me in the hollow of the hand, and show me what he had done. 'My lord,' he would say, 'it will bite no more, and will never again disturb the sleep of your most serene highness.'"

A fellow-prisoner, who had recently been confined in a cell, during a furious paroxysm of insanity, now gave some information to Latude which deeply wounded his feelings. From him, Latude heard that his early friend, D'Alegre, was in the prison, a raving maniac, shut up in an iron cage. His entreaties were so pressing, that the monks granted him permission to visit this unfortunate being. He found him a lamentable spectacle, shrunk to a skeleton, his hair matted, and his eyes sunken and haggard. Latude rushed to embrace him, but was repelled with signs of aversion by the maniac. In vain he strove to recall himself to the maniac's recollection; the lost being only looked fiercely at him, and exclaimed in a hollow tone, "I know you not!—begone!—I am God!" This victim of despotism had been ten years at Charenton, and he continued there in the same melancholy state during the remainder of his existence, which was protracted till a very late period.

After Latude had been for nearly two years at Charenton, his friends succeeded in obtaining an order for his release, on condition that he should permanently fix his abode at Montagnac, his native place. He quitted the prison without hat or coat, all his dress consisting of a tattered pair of breeches and stockings, a pair of slippers, and a greatcoat thirty years old, which damp had reduced to rottenness. He was penniless, too; but he was regardless of all the circumstances; it was enough that he was free.

With some money which he borrowed from a person who knew his family, Latude, procured decent clothing. He called on M. le Noir, who received him not unfavourably, and desired him to depart without delay for Montagnac. Unfortunately he did not follow this advice. He lingered in Paris to draw up a memorial to the king, soliciting a recompense for his plans; and he had

an interview with the Prince de Beauveau, to whom he related his woeful story. In his memorial he mentioned M. de Sartine; and though he intimates that he said nothing offensive, we may doubt whether he manifested much forbearance. The ministers now gave him peremptory orders to quit Paris; it is obvious that they were acquainted with his memorial, and were irritated by it beyond measure. He had proceeded forty-three leagues on his journey to the south of France, when he was overtaken by an officer of police, who carried him back a prisoner to the capital.

Latude was now taught that hitherto he had not reached the lowest depth of misery; he was doomed to experience "a bitter change, severer for severe." Till this time, his companions in suffering had been men with whom it was no disgrace to associate; but in this instance he was tossed among a horde of the most abandoned ruffians on earth; he was immured in the Bicêtre, in that part of the jail which was appropriated to swindlers, thieves, murderers, and other atrocious criminals, the scum and offscouring of France. On his arrival there, he was stripped, clad in the coarse and degrading prison attire, thrust into a dungeon, and supplied with a scanty portion of bread and water.

He was now in the midst of wretches, who tormented him with questions as to what robberies and murders he had committed, boasted of their own numerous crimes, and laughed at his pretending to innocence. "I was condemned," says he, "to endure their gross and disgusting language, to listen to their unprincipled projects, in short, to breathe the very atmosphere of vice." It was in vain that, to procure his liberation from this den of infamy, he wrote to the friends who had rescued him from Charenton; some of them were silenced by the old falsehood that he was a dangerous madman, and others were alienated by being told that he had broken into the house of a lady of rank, and by threats had terrified her into giving him a large sum of money. This last calumny stung him to the soul, and he wrote to M. de Sartine to demand a trial; but his letter produced no other effect than the issuing of an order to take from him the means of writing. Such accumulated injustice soured his mind, and brooding over the hope of revenge, he assumed the name of Jedor, in allusion to a dog so called, the figure of which he had seen on the gate of a citadel, with a bone between his paws, and underneath, as a motto, "I gnaw my bone, expecting the day when I may bite him who has bitten me."

While the money lasted which Latude had taken into the

prison, he could obtain a supply of food, bad indeed of quality, and villainously cooked, but still capable of supporting nature. But the money was soon spent, and he was then reduced to the prison allowance, which was scanty in quantity, of the worst kind, and often polluted by an admixture of filth and vermin. Latude was a large eater, and the portion of food allowed to him was so trifling, that he was tortured by hunger. To such extremity was he driven, that he was compelled to petition the sweepers to give him some of the hard crusts, which were thrown into the passages by the richer prisoners, and which were collected every morning for the pigs.

Bad as the fare of Latude was, his lodging was far worse. His windowless cell, only eight feet square, swarmed with fleas and rats to such a degree, that to sleep was all but impossible; fifty rats at a time were under his coverlet. He had neither fire nor candle, his clothing was insufficient, and the wind and rain and snow beat furiously through the iron grating, which barely admitted the light. In rainy weather, and during thaws, the water ran in streams down the walls of the dungeon. Eight-and-thirty months were spent in this infernal abode. Rheumatism, that prevented him from quitting his pallet, was the first consequence of his exposed situation. This brought with it an aggravation of another evil; for when Latude was unable to approach the wicket, the keeper flung in his bread, and gave him no soup. Scurvy of the most inveterate kind at length attacked him, his limbs were swelled and blackened, his gums became spongy, and his teeth loose, and he could no longer masticate the bread. For three days he lay without sustenance, voiceless and motionless, and he was just on the point of expiring when he was conveyed to the infirmary. The infirmary was a loathsome place, little better than a charnel-house; but the medical aid which he obtained there restored him, after a struggle of many months, to a tolerable state of health.

On his recovery he was placed in a decent apartment. He did not, however, long enjoy it. Having attempted to present a petition to a princess of the house of Bouillon, who came to see the Bicêtre, he was punished by being thrust into a dungeon more horrible than that which he had previously inhabited. His own words will best describe what he underwent. "I was," says he, "still enduring a physical torture, which I had experienced before, though never to so cruel and dangerous an extent. After having triumphed over so many disasters, and vanquished so many

enemies by my unshaken constancy, I was on the point of yielding to the intolerable pain occasioned by the vermin which infested my person. My dungeon was totally dark, my eyesight was nearly extinguished, and I tried in vain to deliver myself from the myriads of these noxious animals that assailed me at once; the dreadful irritation made me tear my flesh with my teeth and nails, until my whole body became covered with ulcers; insects generated in the wounds, and literally devoured me alive. It was impossible to sleep: I was driven mad with agony, my sufferings were drawing to a close, and death in its most horrid shape awaited me."

Gloomy as appearances were, the dawn of a brighter day was at hand. A providential occurrence, which seemed calculated to destroy his last hope, was the cause of his redemption. In 1781, the President de Gourgue visited the Bicêtre, heard the story of Latude, desired that the prisoner would draw up a memorial, and promised to exert himself in his behalf. Latude wrote the memorial, and entrusted it to a careless messenger, who dropped it in the street. The packet was found by a young female, Madame Legros, who carried on in a humble way the business of a mercer, and whose husband was a private teacher. The envelope being torn by lying in the wet, and the seal broken, she looked at the contents, which were signed "Masters de Latude, a prisoner during thirty-two years at the Bastille, at Vincennes, and at the Bicêtre, where he is confined on bread and water, in a dungeon ten feet under ground." The gentle heart of Madame Legros was shocked at the idea of the protracted agony which the prisoner must have suffered. After she had taken a copy of the memorial, her husband, who participated in her feelings, carried it to the president. But the magistrate had been deceived by the falsehood, that the captive was a dangerous, incurable lunatic, and he advised them to desist from efforts which must be fruitless. Madame Legros, however, who had much good sense and acuteness, would not believe that the captive was mad; she again read the memorial attentively, and could perceive in it no indication of disordered intellect. She was firmly convinced that he was the victim of persecution, and she resolved to devote her time and faculties to his deliverance. Never, perhaps, was sublime benevolence so fully displayed as by this glorious woman, whose image ought to have been handed down to posterity by the painter's and sculptor's hand. In the course of her philanthropic struggles, she had to endure calumny and severe privations, she was reduced to sell her

ornaments and part of her furniture, and to subsist on hard and scanty fare; yet she never paused a moment from the pursuit of her object, never uttered a sentence of regret that she had engaged in it. Her husband, too, though less personally active, has the merit of having entirely coincided with her in opinion, and aided her as far as he had the power.

It is delightful to know that her noble labours were crowned with success. Her toils, and the result of them, are thus summed up by Latude, who has also narrated them at great length: "Being thoroughly convinced of my innocence, she resolved to attempt my liberation; she succeeded, and after occupying three years in unparalleled efforts and unwearied perseverance. Every feeling heart will be deeply moved at the recital of the means she employed, and the difficulties she surmounted. Without relations, friends, fortune, or assistance, she undertook everything, and shrank from no danger and no fatigue. She penetrated to the levées of ministers, and forced her way to the presence of the great; she spoke with the natural eloquence of truth, and falsehood fled before her words. They excited her hopes and extinguished them, received her with kindness and repulsed her rudely; she reiterated her petitions, and returned a hundred times to the attack, emboldened by defeat itself. The friends her virtues had created trembled for her liberty, even for her life. She resisted all their entreaties, disregarded their remonstrances, and continued to plead the cause of humanity. When seven months pregnant, she went on foot to Versailles, in the midst of winter; she returned home, exhausted with fatigue, and worn out with disappointment; she worked more than half the night to obtain subsistence for the following day, and then repaired again to Versailles. At the expiration of eighteen months she visited me in my dungeon, and communicated her efforts and her hopes. For the first time I saw my generous protectress; I became acquainted with her exertions, and I poured forth my gratitude in her presence. She redoubled her anxiety, and resolved to brave everything. Often on the same day she has gone to Montmartre to visit her infant, which was placed there at nurse, and then come to the Bicêtre to console me and inform me of her progress. At last, after three years, she triumphed and procured my liberty."

In the first instance, the boon of liberty could not be said to be more than half granted, Latude being ordered to fix his abode at Montagnac, and not to leave the town without the permission of the police officer of the district. As his fortune was entirely

lost, a miserable pension of four hundred livres (about £16) was assigned for his subsistence. By the renewed exertions of Madame Legros, however, the decree of exile was rescinded, and he was allowed to remain at Paris, on condition of his never appearing in the coffee-houses, on the public walks, or in any place of public amusement. The government might well be ashamed that such a living proof of its injustice should be contemplated by the people.

It was on March 24, 1784, that Latude emerged into the world, from which he had for five-and-thirty years been secluded. He and his noble-minded benefactress were for a considerable time objects of general curiosity. Happily, that curiosity did not end in barren pity and wonder, but proved beneficial to those who excited it. A subscription was raised, by which two annuities, each of £300, were purchased, one for Latude, the other for his deliverer. Two other pensions, of 600 livres and 100 crowns, were soon after granted by individuals to Madame Legros, and a gold medal, annually given as the prize of virtue, was unanimously adjudged to her by the French Academy. The income of Latude also obtained some increase; but it was not till 1793 that it received any addition of importance; in that year he brought an action against the heirs of the Marchioness de Pompadour, and heavy damages were awarded to him. Notwithstanding the severe shocks his frame had undergone, the existence of Latude was protracted till 1805, when he died at the age of eighty.



# ORDEAL BY THIRST

By  
JULIAN DUGUID

*This extract is taken from an account of the author's wanderings through the jungles of Bolivia which he calls "Green Hell". His comrades in adventure are Mamerto Urriolagoitia (Urrio), Consul-General for Bolivia in London; J. C. Bee-Mason, a cinematographer; and Alejandro Siemel (Tiger-Man), a Russian hunter of great fame in Bolivia.*

THAT day we joined the noble company of travellers and suffered our baptism of thirst. It is an experience common to all wanderers, a touchstone of almost masonic significance by which those who return may conjure up the memory of their adventures; but there is no denying that the experience at the time is very crude.

For fifteen solid hours we passed neither stream nor water hole, and in so doing took the first bitter step towards the perfection of self-reliance. The northern road from Santo Corazon is, I believe, well served with water, but we were travelling due west into a district little known and less exploited. Before we started the *cacique* told us that we should come to a small farm, the last wild outpost of civilization, a league or two along the jungle path; which is an explanation but certainly no excuse for the fact that we allowed the unromantic hour of our departure to interfere with the filling of our water gourds. Tiger-Man, of course, student of the woods, made no such foolish mistake, for he had relied on himself too long to neglect his usual precautions at the casual word of an Indian. He urged us to follow his example, but finding us obdurate did not press the matter, preferring that hardship from experience should teach its own lesson.

One thing only we had forgotten, and that was vital. In this part of the world, time, money, distance, and, indeed, all the little accuracies on which civilized people rely as a matter of course mean nothing whatever. Up in La Paz a league is officially described as five kilometres, or three miles; in Brazil it is one kilometre more; but throughout the east of Bolivia it is a personal equation depending entirely on individual feeling. Signposts are

unknown, the land has never been surveyed, and so the judgment of distance is mainly a matter of guesswork.

We started out in darkness and bitter cold. Tiger-Man led the way as his custom was, and Bee-Mason, keeping a stern eye on the tiny brown mule that bore his camera, rode at his heels, while Urrio and I brought up the rear. It was an eerie procession tapering away into obscurity, for nobody talked, and the only indication of movement in the fore part of the column was a series of significant noises in the midst of a deep silence. Far in front, the dinner bell clanked with weary monotony, as though the horse disapproved of our hours of travel. *Bruacas* bumped against dim tree trunks, tin plates rattled and hopped, hoofs struck loudly against stones and roots, stirrup irons rattled at the touch of spurs, and at regular intervals Cosmé's *chicote* whistled and cracked till a bullock leaped at the sting of the descent.

Dawn appeared suddenly. One moment everything was dark, the next the world was clear, much in the way of a train emerging from a tunnel. Trees lost their air of black concentration and took on individual forms. Birds shook their feathers and went noisily about their business. Nature was awake.

By nine o'clock the sun was already high and the forest hummed with a hint of fiery majesty in store. At ten the atmosphere was definitely hot, horse flies buzzed along the path and fastened their stings into the necks of our mounts which quivered under the visitation. At half-past eleven there was still no water, and Tiger-Man decreed a halt, for the animals were tired after eight hours of march, and a stream seemed as far away as ever. At midday the sun is right overhead, blazing, pitiless, seemingly immovable, and even in the thickest wood there is no shade cast; so we slung a canvas awning across a pole, and lay sweating beneath it on the ground.

"A long two leagues," said Urrio, wiping his face.

"I suppose we're on the right road," said Tiger-Man. "The *cacique* was positive, and we are heading about west by the sun, so we ought to reach the farm by night."

He unshipped his water bottle from the saddle and passed it over to Urrio who waved it away.

"Thanks, Tiger-Man," he said, "but I don't think I will. Later, perhaps."

He ran a furtive tongue along his lips and smiled, his attitude saying quite plainly:

"If I don't take your advice I can't take your water."

Tiger-Man nodded gravely and turned to Bee-Mason and me, but neither of us was bold enough to go behind Urrio's back.

A queer, amused look came into Tiger-Man's eyes, and he replaced the cork silently and without drinking. It was a silly little comedy, born of a too civilized feeling of security on our part and a really distinguished courtesy on Tiger-Man's. Nevertheless it taught us a lesson and made us feel more of a band.

That afternoon lives with me yet. Thirst, I have found, is easy enough to bear provided that one knows the whereabouts of the next drink. This is precisely what we did not know, for we were by no means sure that the *cacique* had directed us aright. For all we knew we might be days wandering about in the forest with only Tiger-Man's water bottle between us and extinction. Each one of us was aware that the comedy at midday was a pretty enough affair, but we were none of us certain how long we could go on refusing drinks.

The first thing that we felt was not the direct beat of the sun's rays but the uncomfortable warmth of the saddle. It made us stir uneasily, rise in the stirrups, settle our trousers, and wish for a parasol. The reins were hot to the touch, the barrels of our guns left a blister on careless flesh, and our feet ached with the heat that the iron sent through our boots. A heavy haze hung low between the trees, an almost tangible essence of white fire which struck the ground and was reflected into the air. An old horse suddenly took it into its head to roll, and was promptly whipped to its feet. A vast and terrible silence, as though the earth were about to bear a child in flame, fell across the afternoon.

The next four hours, moving as slowly as the tired horses, passed in a kind of drowsy stupor, for nature is more merciful than the minor prophets, and drugs the minds of those who suffer. At a bare two and a half miles an hour the procession crawled down the curling jungle track, and we regretted that we were not in the Amazon where the trees are thick overhead and grant a covering from the heat.

Sitting half asleep on my mule I pondered appropriately enough those characters of history who had been noted for their forced abstinence from drink. Columbus, given twenty-four hours grace by an angry crew, discovering San Salvador by the skin of his teeth; Jonah, pessimistic and doubtful, squatting under a tree in the desert; the Conquistadores and holy fathers, seeking gold and converts in the sort of forest that we were coming to know, Green Hell at her most irritating; and Philip Sidney at Zutphen—there

my vision became blurred and I confused his figure with that of Tiger-Man, erect, bearded, astride a white horse in the manner of a crusading knight leading his army through the wastes of Asia Minor—for I could almost hear Tiger-Man's deep lazy voice on a stricken field in the Netherlands:

"Let the poor blighter have it. This is not my first thirst."

Gradually the glare departed from the woods, the insect orchestra broke out, and just as the sun sank we heard a joyous hail from the front.

"Water!"

A stream, deep-set in the earth, dark and cool by reason of its high banks, sang and bubbled over stones. With guttural, sobbing noises, the animals sucked in great draughts, and their bellies heaved at the effort. Then it was that I saw the reason for that highly illuminating bible story when Gideon took his soldiers for a route march through the burden and heat of a day so that he might test their fitness when they came to a river. Tiger-Man was on his knees, but his face was not buried in the current. He scooped two handfuls from the stream and stood upright watching the animals. This time we took his advice, even though it was unspoken, and did not drink too deeply. We were beginning to learn.

A few minutes later we came to Pacifiqui, a small fertile farmstead where the evening breeze rustled the tall spears of sugar cane, and the drooping plumes of slender palm trees. The owner, a Brazilian from Cuyabá, received us cordially and sent us in the dour light of the last half hour of day to his bathing pool in charge of his son. This tiny animal, aged five, was frankly exultant at escaping from his brother aged two, and flirted outrageously with all of us. He swam like a tadpole in the deep water, shrieked his delight when we splashed him, and with incredible strength threw boulders as big as his body in our direction. When we returned after dark his small wet legs were clasped firmly round my neck and he was whipping my back in an ecstasy of horsemanship.

That evening, when our stomachs had been filled, and the frantic heat of the day was no more than a mirage in our minds, the Brazilian asked a favour of us.

"There is a tiger in the neighbourhood," he said. "One of my servants shot it in the head when he was walking from Santo Corazon yesterday. Unfortunately, it did not die. Here, Domingo!"

His yell arrested a shadow that was passing along the edge of the forest, and an Indian came blinking into the candle light. He was a skinny little man, bare footed and ragged in harmony with his type. Also he was a liar.

"Yes, *patrón*," he said, swelling visibly, "certainly I saw a tiger. A great big brute that lay no more than three paces from me. My little dogs attacked it and I fired my shot gun into its head."

"Then it died?" said Tiger-Man solemnly.

"Unfortunately, no," replied the Indian glibly. "The tigers in these parts have thick heads. It ran away."

"Yes?" said Tiger-Man.

"It went into the forest whither the dogs and I followed it. I shot thrice more, wounding it in the shoulder, the head and the tail, but it killed three of the dogs and escaped."

Here was a fact that might be verified. Tiger-Man glanced at the Brazilian who nodded.

"Three dogs didn't return," he said.

Tiger-Man made up his mind at once.

"The man is obviously a liar in the small points of the story," he said in English. "No tiger could stand a shot-gun cartridge in the head at three paces; probably he meant thirty. But if three dogs were killed we shall find the tiger quite near, and he will be in a filthy temper."

"What are my chances of a picture?" asked Bee-Mason.

"Practically none. You would have to run through thick forest with a camera and tripod in your hand. One cannot wait for a wounded tiger; it isn't fair on the dogs."

"How far is it from here?" he asked the Indian.

"One league, señor, and a short one at that."

So it was arranged that we should borrow three dogs and set out at dawn, for hunting must be done in the early hours before the sun has baked the scent out of the dew. Tiburcio, the leader of our servants, was summoned and told to bring the horses at six o'clock. He looked sulky and cross, scowling out his pock-marked face and mumbling something about a rigorous day. Urrio dealt with him and we went to bed.

I awoke early while it was still dark, and seeing an unwonted light, peered over the edge of my hammock. Tiger-Man, fully dressed, was sitting on a fallen tree-trunk, a native candle burning nearby, and as he bent forward shadows flickered across his bearded face. His rifle was laid across his knee, an oily rag in his hand,

and he fingered his weapon with the gentle touch of a lover. A spot of oil in the breach block, another on the safety catch, yet another on the bayonet groove. He wiped and polished until the barrel shone. Suddenly he drew his bayonet, snapped it into place, cocked the rifle, took steady aim and clicked the trigger. This he did several times until, satisfied with his experiments, he laid it down and turned in my direction.

"My life depends on my gun," he said. "I treat it as carefully as I would a wife."

"How did you know I was awake?" I asked. "You gave no sign."

"Three minutes ago I heard you turn over with a sigh. The deep sound of your breathing stopped and did not continue. As I had no reason to suppose you dead, I concluded that you were watching me."

He rose from his log and strode over to where the servants were sleeping. He shook the leader awake, leaving the rest to their dreams, and sent him through the cane fields for the horses. This annoyed the ill-favoured gentleman exceedingly, and by nine o'clock he had not returned. Cosmé of the great *chicote* was despatched to find him, and while Tiger-Man paced the clearing in an ecstasy of professional indignation, we lingered over our breakfast.

"It is no use," said Tiger-Man, almost weeping with rage. "The scent will be gone. We must start now, and on foot, or not at all."

Urrio picked up his rifle.

"Very well. The horses shall follow us."

So the Indian was summoned, and, beaming all over, he appeared with the tattered remnant of his terriers, a flea-bitten white bitch and two brown dogs which bounced about in the dust and yelped appreciation of our rifles. The Indian set off with easy grace at a round six miles an hour, his shoeless feet making absolutely no sound on the forest path. Tiger-Man kept five paces behind him, his Stetson stiff and erect, his arms swinging, with Urrio at his heels while I brought up the rear. Once Tiger-Man turned.

"Please keep your distance," he said. "If a tiger charges you won't have room to swing your rifle."

Thus we learned the meaning of Indian file.

Our guide had told us that the scene of action lay a bare league ahead, but once again we discovered the charming modesty of

the Bolivian measurements. An hour passed and we were still striding hotly through jungle so thick that we could not see ten paces in any direction. The sun rose higher and higher up the blue arc of the sky, and the heat released the musty odour of the forest. Tiger-Man spoke to the Indian.

"We have walked two leagues already. Did you lie to us?"

A broad grin spread slowly across the yellow Mongolian features.

"Naturally," he said. "White men are lazy, so I thought it better. We have come exactly halfway."

Tiger-Man laughed. "I like a keen hunter. Lead on."

It was now terribly hot, not with the steaming greenhouse heat of the Amazon, but fierce, intense quivering, and when occasionally we left the wood and crossed a clearing, white.

At this hour the forest is hushed, the birds have finished their morning drink and are dozing in the branches where the insects are drowsing beneath the leaves. Consequently the smallest sound is as audible as a pair of nailed boots in a cathedral. As might have been expected, Urrio and I came off worst. We trod on dead branches and tripped over rope weed in a manner that quite drowned the silence of our companions.

At the end of another hour the Indian halted and pointed across a clearing to a block of jungle.

"This is where it happened," he said.

Tiger-Man immediately took charge. An air of intense isolating concentration fell over him, and he whistled to the dogs. Moving as silently as the beast whose life he sought, he entered the shadows and trod delicately between the trees, making low crooning noises the while. His right arm jerked rapidly towards the centre of the wood, after the manner of a keeper urging a spaniel to take the line of a wounded patridge. The terriers knew their job. Ranging swiftly through the undergrowth they passed from our sight, and we seated ourselves on a fallen tree trunk to await results.

Hereabouts Green Hell was at her most magnificent. Purple orchids studded the vast tapestry of green poking their parasitic heads through the rotting forks of trees; lianas hung in slender loops and festoons; underbush cluttered up the ground in luxuriant profusion. Mystery and gloom lurked in every corner of the crowded wood, and the atmosphere was such that one half expected a snake to slither out of every bush. And over all hung a brooding, watchful silence, a thousand times more terrible than the silence of a crouching tiger.

Suddenly from far away to the right came a shrill, excited yapping. Even before the message born of the sound could reach my brain Tiger Man was off his log and ten yards away, running like a deer. Shouts of encouragement issued from his throat, the forest awoke with a start and the echoes clamoured and rumbled through the trees. I had now got into my stride and was running easily a few paces behind the leaders, while Urrio, who was wearing heavy riding boots, crashed along in the rear. It is no easy matter to race through jungle, and it was soon apparent that we were in for a really stern run if we were to save the terriers from being mauled by the wounded tiger. Broken branches rose out of the bushes at our feet, lianas looped themselves about our bodies and refused to be snapped, that most adhesive of thorns, the Queen of Cats, leaned down from the shrubs and dug its claws into our shirts, so that we were in ever present danger of losing touch with one another. By dint of running at cross country racing speed I just managed to keep Tiger-Man's brown shirt in view, but Urrio, hampered by his boots, was forced to run by sound alone.

Presently the barking ceased, and Tiger-Man stopped in his tracks. His face was seamed with anxiety, for it was a pride of his never to lose a dog. Once more his extraordinary insight into the minds of animals was shown.

"I always yell when I am hunting," he said. "It gives the little fellows courage and tells them they are not forgotten."

His speech was bitten short at that moment, for quite near a frenzied barking broke out. We jumped into our stride at once and were soon within the sphere of action as was evident from a new and nerve-shaking sound. It tore through the mask of shrubbery, enveloping us all in the naked savagery of its note. A low, angry, musical rumbling growl echoed on all sides, and by reason of its volume was difficult to place. Tiger-Man, however, headed half right and snapped down the safety catch as he ran. In a couple of minutes we were so near that the noise threatened to overwhelm us, and I knew that at last we were in the presence of the lord of the South American woods, his majesty the jaguar.

Suddenly Tiger-Man fixed his bayonet and dropped on one knee.

"Can you shoot?" he called over his shoulder.

Now I have the misfortune to wear spectacles, and they were wet and fogged from my run.



"Give me ten seconds," I begged, "I am blind with sweat."

"Sorry," he answered, bending to his sights. "I can't wait. He is charging."

So I drew my pistol, for the place where I stood was too thick to swing a rifle, and poked about in the bushes, hoping to see the beast while he was still alive. Almost crying with anger at my helplessness I wiped my blurred glasses and stared at the spot whence came the sounds. I knew I could not be more than a few paces away, yet I could see nothing but a canopy of dappled gold and green. Then a shot rang out and I ran forward to find the dogs tearing at the flanks of an old female, stone dead, with a bullet through its brain.

"I was looking straight at that tiger," I said, "but I could not see it. Why?"

Tiger-Man smiled.

"In this bush, with the sun shining on his coat, he looks like any other spots. You cannot see him until you get used to him."

Then I remembered years ago, stalking chamois in Austria. The mountain side was quite bare of any cover and yet, even with powerful field-glasses, I had been unable to pick out the small brown beasts at the first attempt. Soon Urrio joined us and we removed our shirts and wrung them out for they were soaking.

We tied the tiger to a pole with its feet looped together, and walked back two miles to the path. There was no sign of the horses, so, weary but triumphant, we set out for home; it was two leagues before we came upon the smirking Tiburcio riding gently through the forest. We removed his grin at once by forcing him to give up his mount to the Indian and compelling him to walk while a social inferior rode. Never again did he allow his temper to interfere with his duty.

Thus, after a twenty mile walk and a two mile run, we returned in the early afternoon to Pacifiqui where the Brazilian celebrated the event by broaching his oldest and most potent bottle of spirits.

Our departure for the unknown corresponded with that of an Indian who died at dawn that day. It was an unfortunate affair, for we met his funeral in the forest at a spot where we could not avoid it, and the grim suggestiveness of the ritual shook our men to the depths of their half-awakened souls.

The first sign of anything unusual was a dull, high-pitched screaming that rushed at us from the greenery ahead. It arose out of the silence in eerie waves, ebbing and flowing with terrible passionless monotony in a cadence of two weary notes. Even at

a distance it was sadder and more divorced from hope than any sound I have ever heard. It was as though a sinner had returned to earth with positive tidings that the next life was one long agonizing pain.

Suddenly the dinner bell, proud emblem of our eldest horse, ceased altogether, and as that awful voice drew nearer it broke into a wild clatter that was promptly followed by the hollow boom of *bruacas* crashing against tree trunks. Obviously the horse's nerve had failed. In an instant all the ears of all the mules stood up in rampant sympathy, and a ripple of terror swept quivering along the line of pack animals that stretched out of sight down the curling track. Tails twitched, manes bristled, nostrils blew wide with fright, and it was evident that the slightest incident would send the whole caravan in one mad gallop through the jungle. Urrio rapped out an order, and Cosmé and Adolfo, themselves trembling, leaped to the ground and roped each nervous animal to a tree. In this half-hearted manner we witnessed a procession which, for sheer, stark significance, would have been hard to equal, especially to travellers with their backs to the haunts of men.

First, came three Indians, small, yellow, sad-eyed, each bearing an enormous candle whose naked flame stood upright in the stillness and gleamed dark and unnatural against the splendid background of green foliage. They were followed at a short distance by two haggard and wrinkled old women dressed in ankle-long blue garments, wide and girdleless after the fashion of nightdresses. Coarse black hair tumbled over their shoulders in unbound disarray, and they twined their bony fingers in the ends. They walked with an erect dignity born of generations of water carriers, slow and solemn, eyes hollow and expressionless, hard and unfathomable, like snakes. But for all the sinister repose of their demeanour it was their voices that caused the mules to strain at the ropes, and the men to cross themselves in hurried fear. Harsh, untrained, immeasurably scratchy and dreary, they prayed for the dead man's soul in tones that showed quite plainly that they cared for nothing beyond the fees.

"Professional wailers," said Urrio. "We heard them practising at Santo Corazon."

Whereupon, with a shuffle of naked feet, the principal actor made his bow. A silent, stiff figure, covered with a white cloth, he lay in a rough-hewn, open coffin, borne on the shoulders of six of his companions; and the tip of his nose was pressed

against the shroud, giving a rough outline to his face. Occasionally one of the bearers trod on a thorn and, when the body rolled with an odd sound against the boards, a certain volume of anxiety broke from a number of women who walked immediately behind. These women, like the wailers, seemed to be more concerned with the ritualistic aspect of the matter than with any human sorrow. They neither wept nor beat their breasts, and the peculiar glitter of unshed tears was absent from their eyes. Their very annoyance at the rolling body appeared to be a mixture of family pride in the proper conduct of a funeral and the desire to avoid unnecessary delay. Not one of them showed any regret for the dead man.

That grief for the departed was no more than skin deep we saw when we passed his house. There, before the low doorway, were a number of buxom maidens disporting themselves in Botticellian attitudes, drinking *chicha* and singing, while a small boy worked a cane press in a corner of the clearing. This primitive machine stood between palm trees, and consisted of two polished wooden rollers, upright and cogged at the ends, which crushed the cane stalks to pulp and squeezed the juice into a trough by the circular motion of a couple of bullocks yoked to a beam. The boy was enjoying himself intensely, swinging his raw hide whip about his head and crashing it with loud yells of derision against the patient flanks of his charges. A very old man, quite toothless, sampled the liquor as it dripped from the wheels.

"It's all rather horrible," said Urrio, soothing his mule which had not recovered from the whiff of the corpse.

It was more than that. It was an extremely interesting study of the results of Christian interference, for it represented a cross between barbarism and christianity with the spirit fled from each. Gone was the splendid grief, of breast-tearing that goes with savagery; gone, too, the calm majesty of sorrow with which a gentler faith consigns the dead to sleep. In this terrible procession I could see the stagnant soul of Chiquitos reaching back into the ages, far beyond the Jesuits to the forgotten voices of strange deities whose power had faded through neglect, and whose rites had degenerated into mere senseless babble.

A league farther on we encamped, for night was at hand and we had reached the end of a *cul-de-sac*. The path ceased abruptly and a wall of virgin forest rose sheer out of the ground. Exploration lay ready to our touch. Secretly, I believe, we were all a little awed now that we had come to the point. As we lay smoking in our hammocks after supper there was not quite so

much conversation as usual. We just stared into the golden heart of the fire and gave ourselves up to meditation.

Green Hell, ominous and menacing, loomed above our heads, blocking a large slice of the star-studded sky. A vast silence that was no silence at all, but a holding of breath, warned us against the undertaking. The memory of the funeral returned to us, not as a terror so much as a solemn example of what might happen, and I reflected that we should be spared the honour of professional wailers. For if we died it would be from thirst and hunger, not singly but together. I glanced at the men. They were sitting in a little clump, uneasy and superstitious, looking over their shoulders from time to time as though some spirit of the forest mocked them.

"I feel rather like a new boy on the first day of term," said Urrio suddenly.

"It's a great life," said Bee-Mason determined that none should read him. "Eat when you're hungry, drink when your thirsty and sleep when you're tired."

This argument in a country where water is scarce and game scanty was so open to criticism that we said nothing. Tiger-Man, with the facility of men who live alone, divined our thoughts and spoke lazily from the depths of his hammock.

"I have explored most of Matto Grosso to the north of Cuyabá," he said, "and there is generally a stream every two or three leagues. But once I came to a place like this and spent a fortnight breaking through the belt."

"How did you get water?" I asked, for Urrio and Bee-Mason were too proud to voice the question that touched us so closely.

"Waited till evening and followed the birds," said Tiger-Man cheerfully. "If darkness fell too soon I camped till morning and followed them then."

He cleared his throat and coughed. "There are one or two rules that help a thirsty man. Never take more than a sip at a time from your water bottle, and don't drink that. Runse your mouth and spit. Never ride through the heat of the day. It is easier to be thirsty under a tree, and it saves the animals. Try to keep your thoughts on something cool, and above all never eat if you cannot see a drink."

Bee-Mason lit a cigarette from a flaming branch.

"How long can one do without water?"

"I once passed four days," said Tiger-Man quietly, "but I didn't like it."

We were up by four next day, shivering with the bitterness

of the hour before dawn. The embers of the fire were still aglow, and we fed them heartily, fanning them into flame with our broad-brimmed hats; but it was an eerie business even after the yellow tongues shot up and chased away the shadows. A brooding grimness hung over Green Hell, as though she felt the cold as much as we and grudged us the heat. Massive, gloomy, incredibly overwhelming and near, she placed her formidable bulk in our path; a living barrier between us and San Juan, one hundred and fifty miles to the west. The men felt her presence keenly. They grumbled in undertones and kicked surreptitiously at the mules, with one eye on the trees. Soon, however, the discomfort departed, and the air was full of little reassuring sounds. Mules stamped and snorted, leather fittings creaked as the cinches pulled tight and the straps took the strain of the *bruacas*. Spurs clinked against branches, and sparks sputtered out of the fire, and all the time we warmed ourselves and felt better. In under two hours the cargo was aloft, and we saddled the riding mules to the accompaniment of rattling bridles and the hollow plop of bits as they settled into the mouth, comfortably, behind the teeth. Gaily we mounted.

In every tale of tropical adventure the hero is certain sooner or later to "cut his way through forest." It is a perfect phrase, full-flavoured and romantic, suggesting in five brief words a picture of indomitable men whirling polished axes in a dim green light, while gigantic trees topple off their roots like corn before the reaper. As a confirmed reader of such tales I had promised myself a glamorous time spitting on my hands and laying lustily about me whilst the bright chips flew; but after the manner of anticipation it was different.

There are, I believe, mahogany forests inland from Pernambuco where the trees grow so close together that a laden mule may not pass between. If so, I do not advise a muleteer to journey therein, for a mile a day would be exceedingly quick travelling. In more reasonable country the problem is quite otherwise, because a tree trunk is the last thing to be struck. The barrier lies not in solid timber but in the network of parasitic growths that link the trees in a confused trailing mass, adhesive and irritating. It is not unlike cutting one's way through a strong elastic spider's web, whose strands will bear an almost unlimited strain, but yield quickly enough to a knife.

At first we tried riding straight through without cutting, but we soon changed our minds. Immensely powerful rope-weed, looped and springy, leaned from a great height and folded round

the *bruacas*. The mules, feeling the check pressed forward, but the weed held, with the result that the baggage strained against the cinches, reared up and became unbalanced, so that the trunks dragged along the ground. After this had happened once or twice we altered our procedure, the men were left behind with the animals, while Urrio, Tiger-Man, Bee-Mason and I rode in advance like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, wielding our *machetes* and moving forward in a solid line. In this way we managed to make good time, though our arms became so weary that we had to change hands every half-hour.

At intervals in the forest came patches of more open country, low bush, where for a while we could sheathe our *machetes*. We entered these suddenly as a rule, for the sharp, blue line of the horizon lay surprisingly far down the tree trunks, a phenomenon which caused us to expect a clearing for several miles before it came. Towards evening these clearings were an immense boon because the wind blew lightly through them, and we were able to sleep away from the musty, enclosing smell of the jungle, but in the day-time they were not by any means welcome, because they meant a return to the piercing white heat that blazed down from a heaven grey with haze in a manner quite unknown under the green foliage; and thirst became a really vital problem.

In a thoroughly chastened spirit we paid heed to Tiger-Man's suggestion, and imposed on ourselves a rigid water-discipline. No longer did we drink gaily whenever we felt the need, but after one sad look turned our thoughts into soothing channels and passed our tongues along dry lips. At noon we halted and lay under a strip of canvas without speaking, for even a word is a waste of saliva, and we had none to spare. The cook made as if to light a fire and stew some rice, but Urrio, after a quick glance at Tiger-Man, shook his head decisively. There was just enough water for one boiling for eight men, and we had not found the evening's supply. At night, under the influence of the breeze, we should be able to eat something without much water, but at midday it would be madness. So we lay quietly on the ground and listened to the busy voice of Green Hell.

When the heat had nearly passed, we arose stiffly and set about the business of the afternoon. The animals stood about in groups, knees sagging, heads down, tails switching with spasmodic energy. Tiger-Man approached and scanned them one by one. Five of the cargo mules had sore backs, old wounds that were rising again in great lumps, and which, when rubbed against

the packs, broke and suppurated. It was serious as well as distressing, for we had no spare animals and San Juan and safety lay one hundred and fifty miles ahead, steering roughly by compass. In a great measure it was out of our control, because directly the saddles were removed, the poor beasts lay on their backs in an ecstasy of irritation, and even bit at each other's sores in order to ease the pain. We did what we could by retaining the straw saddle-cloths until the sweat had dried, but the one sure alleviation was salt and water, a cure we had practised twice daily in the land of streams, but which was beyond our powers now. It was pitiful to see them. Now and again a mule, driven beyond reason, would drop down on the march and roll on top of the *bruacas* in an effort to scratch away the pain.

That afternoon Tiger-Man decided to ride ahead in search of water and took me with him, for I wished to savour every aspect of our varied life. We abandoned our *machetes* and cut long sticks, because a horseman can parry the rope weed, turning it aside as a fencer parries a rapier. By degrees the noise of the mule train dropped behind, and we rode straight into the sun's eye, alone and silent.

Never shall I forget the appearance of Green Hell on that occasion. She wore a symphony in green, beginning with a dark hem in the undergrowth, and passing from every variety of shade as it rose towards the pale green of the tree tops. Bright purple orchids hung from the armpits of great trees, blue butterflies fluttered across our vision, and lizards peeped at us curiously and without fear. There was a certain irritating atmosphere, described by Urrio on the river as "looking lived in," which made itself severely felt. Everything seemed familiar and friendly, as though one might see smoke from a cooking fire at any minute. I had the impression that no harm could come to us under the all-powerful protection of the leaves; and it took an immense effort of imagination to realize that a whole army might die and its bones whiten for years with nobody much the wiser. Hundreds of miles of jungle, rolling past countless horizons, league upon wooded league, each twenty yards promising to be the last, the spirit of Green Hell, merciless and indomitable, beckons the wanderer forward with a will-o'-the-wispy, tantalising smile, hovering among the branches. I can quite imagine a traveller who was new to the game striding confidently onward, his palate tickled, and his fears lulled by the beauty of the place, while time passed like a cloud. It is all so green and luxuriant that it would

never strike him that water might be hard to find, and then, growing thirsty, he would press a little faster, determined to bathe and rest; but the hours would pass and the sun would sink, and in the watches of the night a ghastly uncertainty would arise in his mind. Next day, he would settle down to business, his chin well out, his legs moving swiftly between the trees—and still the woods would mock him. Days would go by and his mouth would be a blistered hell, and his mind inflamed with a desire for water far beyond any desire for women. In the end he would lose his head, forget to steer by the sun, stagger in a great circle and fall hopeless and mad on the second round of his own tracks.

As we rode along I studied Tiger-Man's face, and thanked our beginner's luck for having secured him. He did not appear to be in the least perturbed, no shadow of mistrust showed in his bright blue eyes as they ranged the forest for signs of water. There was an almost jaunty air about him, buccaneering, yet watchful, that seemed to laugh in the face of trouble. His mode of life during the last fourteen years had made him immeasurably superior to our town-bred sophistication. He seemed to be part of the forest, his skin and beard and clothes merged into the background as naturally as if he had been a tiger. His very being was alert with the quiet strength of a wild beast. He turned in the saddle his feet loose below the stirrups, his hat thrust back from his forehead.

"This must seem very strange to you," he said gently.

Later in the expedition I should have admitted frankly that I was not enjoying myself, but at that moment I was forcing my imagination to behave itself, and I did not dare to consider the possibility of the failure to find water. I knew that in his eyes I was still unproved and, my pride rising on its hind legs, I told him it was just what I expected, that I rather liked it, and that anyway it was better than going to an office in London. Gravely, and without the suspicion of a twinkle, he agreed. For Tiger-Man was perhaps the greatest gentleman I have ever met.

At half-past five, when the sun appeared to be almost level with our eyes, we were still without any trace of water. Birds were scarce, and those that we saw were vultures sweeping the sky in moody, sombre circles. No tracks of tiger or tapir were visible in the hard-baked ground, and it really looked as though we should have to go thirsty to bed. A slight furrow appeared between Tiger-Man's brows, and he spoke shortly.

"We can last some days longer than the animals," he said.



"If they go we shall have the choice of walking forward or back."

I thought of the odds of five to one offered against us in Gaiba, and found no pleasure in it. Suddenly with a loud sweeping of wings and a deafening hoarse cackle, four huge macaws passed overhead, casting a thick shadow as they went. Simultaneously, Tiger-Man's mule threw back its head and sent a throaty whistle echoing through the trees. It was a pathetic sound, mid-way between the contralto of a horse and the soprano of a donkey, but it made Tiger-Man slip his feet into his stirrups and grin.

"Water," he called joyfully and lifted his hat.

With that one word the benediction of nature descended on our bare heads, and for the moment we forgot our thirst. The animals needed no urging, they broke into a tired run that made us duck in the saddle and wield our sticks so as to parry the lianas and the light green claws of her majesty the Queen of Cats. The scurry lasted for a quarter of an hour, and then we came to an open glade. Half way across was a red gash running diagonally, the top of which was shot with the dry roots of shrubs. It appeared to shelve deeply into a long green bed which ran the length of the clearing.

"A stream," said Tiger-Man, dismounting.

Slipping our bridles through our arms we walked wearily across the glade, a lust for water burning in our hearts. Often we looked at each other and laughed in a perfectly idiotic manner which showed how deeply we were set on just this ending to the day. Quickly we approached the edge and looked over, and a low cry, quickly checked, broke from our throats. As far as the eye could reach the bottom of the water course was dry, pebbly and bare.

Tiger-Man recovered himself at once. Indeed, I am still not sure whether it was not I who made all the noise in the beginning. He turned his mule and watched it intently. The beast, after one quick look at the bed, moved its head from side to side in an endeavour to scent the water. Almost without hesitation it jerked at the bridle, and tried to run away up stream. Tiger-Man eyed me.

"There is water up there," he said, "probably in a shady hole under the bank where the sun has been unable to reach. Pitch your hammock and unsaddle your animal, make a large fire, and keep your rifle loaded. I am going back."

"But your thirst?" I protested.

He touched his water bottle.

"They may be an hour behind us; remember they had to cut their way. I have a torch, but I don't want to get lost. The fire should guide us. If it does not I shall fire my rifle three times quickly, and you must answer. When the fire is well ablaze you can look about for water, but don't let the mule paddle until we have drawn our supply. See you later."

His tall, broad-shouldered figure vanished into the shadows, and while I set about my task I could hear his voice raised in song receding into the distance. So I pitched my hammock and tethered my mule and placed three dried tree trunks in a heap, and, the flames ascending, walked quickly up the water-course.

Half a mile from camp I came suddenly round a corner on to a most curious scene. A small round pool, winking like a Rabelaisian wit in the light of the setting sun, lay under an overhanging piece of bank. Round it on three sides were the giant macaws which had passed us earlier in the evening. Royal blue and yellow, brilliant and grotesque, their tails spread out behind them like jewelled trains, they squatted on their little grey legs, and thrust their heavy beaks deep into the water. One by one they raised their heads so that the water might trickle down their throats, and made chuckling noises of supreme contentment. I crouched behind a boulder and watched them, unwilling to disturb their drink. A month back I should have sent them flying without a qualm, but thirst had sharpened my sympathies, and some of Tiger-Man's consideration for his fellow sharers of the jungle entered into me. In a few minutes they were satisfied and fluttered up into a tree where their tails could hang down in comfort, and sat close together crooning. I waved my hat at them and they jabbered back, not at all frightened, but inquisitive.

When I returned the rest of the party had arrived. We gave the cook ten minutes start with a bucket, and then loosed the mules. With a clatter of hooves and a perfect tempest of whistles they swept up the water-course and in due time were shepherded back, by which time a meal was ready and we sat down lazily like animals, supremely and blissfully happy under the glory of a cool, clear night.

# ESCAPE FROM A SUNKEN SUBMARINE

By

T. C. BRIDGES and H. HESSELL TILTMAN

*The courage and fortitude with which all these men, in the practical darkness of the slowly flooding compartment, faced a situation more than desperate, was in accordance with the very highest traditions of the Service.*

THESE words are quoted from a report received by the Admiralty from the Commander-in-Chief of the British Fleet in Chinese waters, with regard to the loss of the submarine *Poseidon*, and the whole report was read by the First Lord of the Admiralty before a crowded House of Commons on a day in July, 1931. The First Lord added, amid cheers, that suitable recognition of those concerned was under consideration by the Admiralty.

The *Poseidon*, one of the large and powerful P Class of submarines, was built in 1929 by the firm of Armstrong-Vickers. She was two hundred and sixty feet long, had a surface speed of 17.5 knots, and was fitted with eight 21-inch torpedo tubes. Her displacement was one thousand four hundred and seventy-five tons.

With her three sister ships, *Perseus*, *Pandora*, and *Proteus*, she was commissioned at Barrow on March 20, 1930. She was manned equally from Portsmouth, Devonport, and Chatham, and the four submarines left Portsmouth on December 12, 1930, on a fifteen thousand mile voyage to the eastern seas, where they were to replace vessels of the L Class. In old days submarines were always escorted on long voyages by surface ships, but these four P Class submarines were considered powerful enough to look after themselves, and voyaged without escort.

The voyage was marred by a mishap, for, when only five days out, the *Proteus* and the *Pandora* came into collision. They were, however, only slightly damaged, and were able to reach Gibraltar, where repairs were effected. The flotilla then proceeded to Chinese waters, and made its way to Weihaiwei, the naval and coaling station on the north-east coast of the Chinese province of Shantung.

On June 9, 1931, manœuvres were being carried out, and at midday the *Poseidon* was about twenty-one miles out from port

and some distance from the rest of the squadron when she was rammed by the steamer *Yuta*. The *Yuta* was a British-built ship of about two thousand tons, but owned and manned by Chinese.

The *Yuta* struck the *Poseidon* on the starboard side with such terrible force that her heavy bow drove right through the steel side of the submarine. The force of the collision rolled the submarine over, flinging every one in her off his feet, and drove her almost under water. As the *Yuta* reversed her propellers and drew clear the sea poured into the breach in the *Poseidon's* side, and within two minutes the submarine had disappeared.

At the time of the collision the submarine had been running on the surface, so fortunately her conning-tower was open and twenty-nine of the crew, including five officers, managed to scramble out, and fling themselves into the sea. These were all picked up by boats lowered by the *Yuta*.

The rest, trapped helplessly in the bowels of the ship, were most of them, drowned at once. The exceptions were six men, who at the time of the accident were in the forward torpedo flat. These were Petty Officer Patrick Willis, who was torpedo gunner's mate, Able-seaman Locock, Able-seaman Holt, Able-seaman Nagle, Leading-seaman Clarke, and a Chinese steward, Ah Hai.

Their feelings may be imagined when they were all flung off their balance by the deadly shock of the collision, and when they heard the screech of torn steel all knew what had happened.

From a distance came the echoed shout, "Close watertight doors," and all picked themselves up and sprang to obey. The bulkhead was buckled by the force of the collision, the door stuck, and it took the combined efforts of all the men to force it back into position. Willis took charge. "Stick to it," he told them; "it may save the ship." But within a few moments all knew that there was no chance of this, for the submarine lurched heavily to starboard, and she shot to the bottom with terrible speed.

It was a moment of absolute horror for the six men in that low-roofed, air-tight compartment. They were far out to sea, they knew the water was deep, but none knew exactly how deep. To make matters worse the shock of the collision had cut off all electric lights, and they were in black and utter darkness.

With a slight jar the submarine struck bottom and settled on the soft mud, luckily in an upright position. For a few moments there was complete and deadly silence; then a beam of light cut through the blackness. Willis had found an electric torch and switched it on. His first care then was for the bulkhead door.

A small amount of water was leaking through, but not enough to cause alarm. The danger was from suffocation. The air in this confined space would not last six men for very long.

Willis knew that although every effort would be made to reach them by the surface ships, which included the aircraft carrier *Hermes* and the cruisers *Berwick* and *Cumberland*, a considerable time must elapse before divers could descend, and he was aware that if their lives were to be saved all must depend upon their own efforts.

There was just one hope. The *Poseidon*, like all modern submarines, carried the Davis rescue gear. This consists of a sort of gas-mask with a coat that slips over the head. It is provided with a cylinder containing enough oxygen to last the wearer for forty-five minutes. When the tap of the oxygen cylinder is turned, the garment expands like a balloon. Wearing this apparatus, a man can rise to the surface from any depth where the pressure is not sufficient to crush him.

Then why not step out at once and go up to the top is the question which will occur to a good many of our readers.

It seems simple enough, but in point of fact the difficulties of escaping from a closed steel shell, such as that in which Willis and his companions were imprisoned, are very great. The submarine lay at the bottom of water more than one hundred feet deep, and the pressure on the hatch, which was their only way out of the compartment, was enormous. The combined muscle power of a score of men could not have lifted that hatch a single inch, and, as Willis knew, the only way in which to open it was to equalize the pressure.

Some of the men knew this as well as Willis, but others did not fully understand, so as they stood there in the thick, stuffy darkness, Willis carefully explained it to them. Then he hesitated.

"We're in a pretty tight place. Hadn't we better say a prayer, lads?" he suggested. Nods gave consent, and as all stood with bared heads Willis uttered a brief prayer for divine help, and the others responded, "Amen."

Then Willis took command.

"We've no time to waste," he said. "I'm going to open the valves and flood the compartment." Some one suggested that if he flooded the compartment he would drown the lot, for the water would rise over their heads, but Willis had already thought that out, and directed two of the men to rig a hawser from one side to the other, so that they could all stand on it. The Chinese

boy did not understand how to put on his escape gear, so Seaman Nagle showed him the way of it. Nagle backed up Willis all the way through, and did his share toward keeping up the spirits of the rest of his companions.

The valves were opened, and water began to pour in. The six took up their positions on the hawser below the hatch and waited. Since they had but one torch and no refill Willis switched it off so as to save light, and there they stood in Stygian blackness while the water bubbled in and rose slowly over the floor beneath them.

The air grew more and more stuffy, and after a time the man next to Willis whispered to him that he thought the oxygen in his flask was exhausted, for he could no longer hear it bubbling. Willis tested his own, and found that it, too, was empty. But he had no idea of allowing that fact to be known. Anything like panic would be fatal at this juncture.

"It's all right," he answered, lying valiantly; "you can't hear anything in mine, but there is plenty left." The minutes dragged by, each seeming like an hour. It was not only the darkness but the intense silence which strained their nerves to the uttermost. Now and then Willis switched on his torch, and glanced down at the water, which, owing to the air pressure, rose very slowly. After two hours and ten minutes had passed the water had risen above the hawser and was up to the men's knees, then at last Willis decided that the pressure must be pretty nearly equal, and that it was time to go.

"All right, boys," he said, "we'll try it now." He looked round. Two of the men, Lovock and Holt, were clearly in a bad way, and he decided that they should go first. The next thing was to open the hatch, and this was a more difficult matter than Willis had anticipated. The pressure was not yet equalized, and it was all that he and Nagle and Clarke could do, between then, to open it. Lovock and Holt were pushed through, they vanished one after another into the dark gloom, then down came the hatch again, held like iron by the outside pressure.

Darkness again, and the water rising slowly. It reached their waists, it crawled up their chests. They shivered with cold.

At last it had reached their shoulders, and only their heads were above it. All the air left was just that contained in the narrow space between them and the low roof, and this highly compressed air was almost unbreathable. They had now been imprisoned for more than three hours.

Willis gave the order to open the hatch. Imagine their feelings

as with numbed fingers and muscles weakened by the long and terrible strain they tried to force up the steel door. They all knew that if it would not open they were drowned.

It did open, and the compressed air rushed out, for the moment staying the inrush of the sea. The Chinese boy went first, then the others one after another, Willis himself remaining to the last. Exhausted by the long suspense and by breathing bad air, none of them had much recollection of the upward rush toward the surface, and not one had the strength left to keep himself afloat. Happily boats were waiting, and each, as he appeared above the surface, was quickly picked up, and with all speed taken to the hospital bay aboard the *Hermes*.

Willis's first inquiry was for Lovock and Holt, and he was saddened to hear that Lovock had come to the surface unconscious, and died almost immediately. Holt, in a state of exhaustion, had managed to support Lovock's body until both were picked up.

Willis recovered rapidly, and refused to remain in hospital a day longer than was necessary. At the beginning of September he arrived back in England, and was drafted to the torpedo training school at Portsmouth. Then he began to suffer from sleeplessness. Night after night he lived over again those agonizing hours in the black gloom of the flooded chamber at the bottom of the muddy Chinese sea. He made no complaint, but neurasthenia developed, and he was sent to Netley Hospital.

Meantime a London newspaper started a shilling subscription for the purpose of buying a home for the brave fellow. The response was immediate and generous. Money came from all parts of the country and all parts of the Empire, and a house was bought at Merton, in Surrey, and well equipped and furnished. There Patrick Willis, with his young wife and baby daughter Julia, has made his home.

Willis has left the navy and found employment in civil life. He is physically fit again, and no doubt in time his nervous system will recover from the strain to which it was subjected.

We began this chapter by quoting from the official report on the *Poseidon* disaster. We cannot end it better than by repeating the last sentence of that same report :

*The coolness, confidence, ability, and power of command shown by Petty Officer Willis, which, no doubt, was principally responsible for the saving of so many valuable lives, is deserving of the very highest praise.*

## DEFYING DEATH FOR A BET

*By*

A. J. RUSSELL

SO impressed was O. Henry by the tall and splendid figure of Lord Kitchener, that he made the heroine of one of his great short stories turn from vice to virtue as the result of a glance at the field-marshal's photograph.

Had O. Henry met a contemporary of Kitchener's he would have seen a more impressive figure still; for Colonel Fred Burnaby was the most splendid personality of the Victorian age. But for the intervention of fate, Burnaby would have rivalled and perhaps forestalled Kitchener in all his exploits, for in military prowess, in reckless daring, as well as in personal appearance he had all the advantages, and more, of the great field-marshal.

His face was finely cut and he was strikingly handsome. His voice was magnificent and he was a bright and engaging conversationalist. With a chivalrous daring he combined a romantic gentleness. The grandeur of his personality was enhanced by his being undoubtedly the strongest man of his time.

He had tremendous courage. To say that Burnaby, like Nelson, Clive, Wellington, and other celebrities, was fearless, is to write the commonplace truth. Nelson, though somewhat effeminate in appearance, had a combative courage that made him writhe with indignation when an Englishman talked of parleying with the upstart Bonaparte. Nelson would pick up a poker and, illustrating his attitude towards the Corsican adventurer, would say, "If Napoleon says this poker must be laid in that direction we must immediately lay it in another place, irrespective of where it should be laid."

So with young Burnaby. He was born, said his nurse, with a "contradictorious" spirit, and the very suggestion of a thing being forbidden impelled him to dare it. He was fortunate in being endowed with the necessary ability to follow that "contradictorious" spirit wherever it led him.

He claimed to be descended from Edward I. Born the fighting son of a fox-hunting parson, he began very well for a soldier. Whatever charges can be brought against that type of parson, they



do not include narrowness. When at his public school Burnaby fought and licked a boy bigger than himself, his father gave him a shilling as a reward. Looking into the azure from his rectory garden, his father saw one of the early balloons drifting uncontrolled across the sky, and, casually observing that his son was probably in it, said they should make ready to entertain him when he arrived. Not that he knew Fred was in the balloon, only that he was just the foolhardy type of youth who would risk his life in such a dangerous contrivance.

Fred Burnaby *was* in the balloon. He was one of the pioneers of ballooning. His first trip was in an invention raised skywards by hot air heated by a straw-fed furnace, actually in the balloon, the smoke and flames visible to the watchers below. At the last minute Burnaby was told that he could not be taken up for, as he was six feet four inches tall and seventeen stone in weight, there was no room, and not enough power to lift him. Just as the balloon was rising Burnaby jumped in; the basket came down again and bumped along the ground. Not observing the cause, the inventor made more hot air and ascended again.

On another occasion Burnaby came down in a tree; then, alone, he took a balloon across the English Channel. The Duke of Cambridge, as commander-in-chief of the Army, rebuked him for crossing to Europe without leave, but really because he was taking too many risks. The British Army could not spare so gallant an officer.

By this time his feats of strength had made him a legendary figure. Two small ponies, which were bought for Queen Victoria, were brought to the officers' mess at Windsor for Burnaby to see. He was in his room on the first floor and the ponies were driven up to him. He enjoyed the joke, but when the time came for them to be taken to the queen they refused to descend. Whereupon Burnaby came to the rescue. He took one under each arm and carried them down the stairs. Two witnesses of this feat were King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra.

Something similar happened in Birmingham, where Burnaby was a candidate for Parliament. One of his opponents was Joseph Chamberlain, but it was Burnaby who, in that city, made the first speech in favour of tariff reform. At one of his meetings, some of the men made audible objections to Burnaby's cultured voice. He stopped and beckoned two of the objectors to come to the foot of the platform. Leaning over he took each by the collar and lifted them both at arm's length on to the platform. Dumping each into a

seat, he said rebukingly, "You sit there, my little man." The effect on the audience was tremendous. There was no further interruption in the presence of this physical superman.

He intended to study for the Church, but was so emotionally affected by hearing his father reading the burial service that he changed his mind. His brother Evelyn, however, decided to follow his father's calling, while Fred took a commission in the "Blues." One day a Pole took exception to Evelyn and demanded a duel. Fred said that it would be a little awkward as his brother was being trained for the Church, but he offered his services. The Pole paled and made an absurd excuse. Yet it was this brother Evelyn who, as a boy, when asked by his father what special present he would like, sturdily demanded that lurid record of crime—"The Newgate Calendar"!

Burnaby was always spoiling for trouble. As a small lad at Harrow, he disliked the fagging system there and wrote to *Punch* a letter in which he ridiculed it. He signed himself "The Toad under the Harrow."

Once, when King Edward VII was watching, Burnaby took a thick kitchen poker and curled it round a fellow-officer's neck. The victim endeavoured to release himself, and when he could make no impression on his new tie, Burnaby quietly straightened it with as much ease as though it were putty. One of his playthings was a dumb-bell weighing over one and a half hundredweights, which only one other man of his day could lift. But this was not all. He could vault over a billiard table, run along a horizontal bar like Blondin; run, row, ride, hop and walk five successive quarters of a mile in one quarter of an hour.

He boxed almost every inhabitant in the neighbourhood of his father's place, including the local policeman, who was afterwards presented with a sovereign. He wrote from Spain that he had had great fun talking to the Spaniards about bull-fighting which, they said, was the finest sport in the world. He had replied, "Oh, but you should see a man box; that is something like a fight!" to which they would always reply, "How cruel and barbarous you English are!"

Back in politics, assisting his cousin, General Burnaby, he was addressing a meeting in Leicester when a party of roughs raised pandemonium. His cheek flushed and his eye flashed. Drawing himself up to his full height, he announced that he would throw the disturbers out. Derisive laughter and challenges to come and do it followed this threat. Despite the entreaties of his friends, he

strode down the hall and felled the ringleader with a single blow. The others rushed upon him but Burnaby, greatly enjoying himself, sent every one of them sprawling, leaving him in a few minutes with a clear space of six or seven feet. Those who had been struck now left the hall and Burnaby returned to the platform amid great cheering.

The meeting continued in silence, but afterwards the roughs waited for him. Wearing his huge greatcoat and looking like a Colossus, he sauntered by them towards his hotel. A potato was thrown and it struck him. He looked round but took no further notice. Some ruffians followed him to his cab and crowded round him. He turned suddenly and, throwing out his left arm, told them to "get away." Even that insignificant push sent five of them into a confused heap on the ground. Still wearing his inevitable pleasant but Mephistophelian smile, Burnaby hoped that he hadn't hurt the beggars.

Other stories told of him before he undertook that ride for which he will always be remembered, might have been taken from the *Arabian Nights*. He was a great traveller, and his personal appearance as he sat on his horse, a colonel of the "Blues," or sauntered through the streets of a foreign town, never failed to attract attention. His splendid figure would sometimes appear in Spanish ballrooms giving pleasure to the dark-eyed Andalusian beauties who would delight to dance with him. Once in Tangier he expressed a special wish to see an exhibition of Moorish dancing girls. But as these dances were prohibited there, the girls had to be smuggled into a dance room specially hired for the occasion. If detected they would be imprisoned. While two of them played the harp the others performed graceful evolutions unrivalled by anything of the kind that Burnaby had previously seen. In the midst of the exhibition the soldiers arrived, thundered at the door and announced that Moorish girls with unveiled faces were believed to be dancing before infidels. They had been sent to search the place. The French officer drew a sword-cane and Burnaby, who was unarmed, snatched up a bed-post. In a lively fight the soldiers were worsted; they left with savage curses. The girls escaped by the roof.

Later, Burnaby found himself in Constantinople, where he was warned by an Armenian against going to Van, for he would be robbed or murdered by the Kurds. That made him determine to go to Van. It was the same combative spirit that started him on another and greater adventure, his ride to Khiva in Central Asia.

In his book, *A Ride to Khiva*, Burnaby describes how he was being entertained at Khartoum by a German friend. "A graceful girl, with large dark eyes and pearl-white teeth, but whose olive complexion and oriental dress showed that she was in no way akin to the fairer beauties of Europe, was engaged in handing round small cups of coffee to the most excited talkers of the party, an Italian, an Arab, an Englishman, the former gesticulating wildly in an endeavour to interpret between his two companions, who were evidently not at all in accord with him about the subject of conversation. A bright sun, its rays flashing down on a broad stream, nearly the colour of lapis-lazuli, which flowed hard by the dwelling, had raised the temperature of the room to an almost unbearable heat. It was the month of February."

Burnaby's eye fell on a paragraph in a newspaper saying that an Englishman had been stopped by the authorities from penetrating into Russian Asia. At the same time one of the party asked where they would all be at that time next year. Burnaby called attention to the paragraph and said that he proposed to go to Central Asia. He was told that he would never get there. Historic Samarkand had been annexed to the Czar's dominions, and Russian troops were now quartered in the Khiva territory. Yet Khiva lay between India and Russia proper, and just before the Russian attack her khan had sent a request for help to the British Government who, thought Burnaby, would have been better advised to have given it than to have trusted the Russian promise not to annex it, which she had since done.

The Russian general in charge of this area had warned an Englishman that if he wrote anything of what he saw in these parts he would be promptly hanged. Burnaby wondered how the Russians were behaving there, for it was the route by which one day they were expected to march into India. That order prohibiting the presence of the English in Central Asia—what did it mask? Were the conquered people being treated so cruelly that they were afraid of the truth reaching the ears of their more enlightened emperor? Were the vices and depraved habits of the East being acquired by the Russian conquerors?

Burnaby knew there had been some dark deeds perpetrated in and around Khiva. He was warned that if he went there alone the khan would probably have his eyes gouged out. Khans of Khiva had in past centuries behaved very brutally to unwanted visitors. Five hundred raiding Cossacks had once been slain to a man. Previously, when the khan and his forces were absent, other

Cossacks had raided Khiva, taken booty and one thousand women, and decamped. So heavy was their extra baggage that they were overtaken and surrounded by the Khivans. The Russians had no water, so, fighting for some days, they had to quench their thirst with the blood of the slain. When nearly all the Russians were killed, the rest surrendered. A third campaign against Khiva had no better results. This time the Cossacks lost their way and found themselves on the shores of the Sea of Aral. Starving, they killed some of their number, and lived as cannibals. Later they sold themselves as slaves to the Khivans.

A fourth attempt on Khiva led to severe fighting, and a truce, during which the attacking Russian prince divided his troops, who were then attacked and cut to pieces. But a recent expedition had conquered the state, the so-called insolence of the Khans of Khiva had been punished, and a war indemnity levied upon them. Not only the Khivans but the Turcomans too had been made to suffer. Hell had been let loose. Men, women, and children at the breast had all been slaughtered. Neither age nor sex had been spared.

Despite the restrictions against Englishmen, Burnaby determined to get to Khiva to see if all was now well. He was told that if he asked permission the Russian Government would openly raise no objection, but they would have him stopped through diplomatic channels before he could arrive at Khiva. Remembering this, he resolved to travel at the greatest possible speed; he might beat the leisurely diplomats, which in fact he did.

The cold of these areas at mid-winter, the only time when Burnaby could get leave for the journey, was another obstacle to the undertaking. He had to travel over hundreds of miles of expansive flat country devoid of everything but snow, salt lakes, and bramble-trees. The winds in this part of Asia are beyond the belief of Europeans accustomed to mild breezes tempered by the mountains and warm seas. The winds blow on without interruption over vast tracts covered with snow and salt; they cut the face of a traveller as though they were whips.

Burnaby was told in Russia that the day would come when their two countries would together conquer the world, that though the English thought the Russians wanted to take India, they forgot the more important point which was that India wanted to be free. By educating the Indians, England was foolishly opening the way for the agitators to win back their country. All were of the opinion that in mid-winter it was impossible to get to Khiva. Burnaby might as well try to get to the moon. Nor would anybody believe

that a British officer was travelling in these parts without being a secret spy for his government. There was no railway to Khiva and he found an astonishing ignorance among Russian officials as to the nearest station to which he should book. When the inspector, lifting his box of four hundred cartridges, remarked that the case was heavy, Burnaby agreed and explained that it held little instruments which contained lead. During the rail journey to Penza, his fellow-travellers discussed the various nations of Europe and hoped that England would again declare war on Russia, for the railway to Sebastopol was now open! They asked him if he was a German, and he replied that he was an Englishman and thanked them for their entertaining conversation.

Though the serfs had just been freed they were still in great fear of their Russian overlords. One Russian nobleman was furious with the stoker of the train for not having kept the fire burning. When he swore at the old fellow, the stoker was so frightened that he trembled and kept crying out as though he were being lashed with the whip. Wherever he went, Burnaby found that the whip was still in evidence. A servant, recommended to him, asked a month's wages in advance, as he wished to leave it with his bed-ridden mother. Burnaby thought this a reasonable request and gave the advance. But the servant did not turn up next morning, and the waiter at Burnaby's hotel laughingly explained that this man made a practice of getting something in advance from travellers and then giving them the slip. Burnaby went to the police. The man was traced. He was found drinking in a tavern with some women, half of the money spent. Cringing and whining, he begged not to be whipped and promised that he would return the money. The police told him to go and get it and they would discuss the question of the whipping later on.

One of the servants whom Burnaby employed was careless of the provisions which he let fall, breaking their glass containers. When the traveller remonstrated, the servant shrugged his shoulders and said that it was the will of Allah. After a few of these experiences, Burnaby decided to chastise the delinquent the next time he dropped a package. The servant protested volubly, but Burnaby quietly replied that since it was the will of Allah that he had dropped the goods it was also the will of Allah that he should be punished for doing so. There were now fewer casualties in the commissariat.

Nazar, another servant, proved to be a loyal, active fellow, yet like everybody else in these quarters, he was something of a sadist.

He induced Burnaby to hurry forward to the market place at Ureisk to see a murderer officially beaten to death. Burnaby mingled with a vast crowd about a scaffold on which stood a large black cross. It was surrounded by lines of infantry who kept the people back by dropping the butts of their rifles on their toes. A loud hum swelled to a bass roar, announcing that the *cortège* with the prisoner was in sight. He was mounted on a block of wood in a dirty old cart drawn by a mule. On arrival at the platform the prisoner saw the black cross and turned deadly pale. He quickly recovered himself and nodded carelessly to some of his acquaintances. An order was given and the prisoner was tied to the cross. Then a magistrate read the sentence—the culprit would be sent to Siberia.

At this the bloodthirsty Nazar was considerably disappointed. "And so we are to have no performance," he said. "It is too bad for the authorities to cheat us thus." Nevertheless, Burnaby understood that forced labour in the Siberian mines usually ended the existence of the strongest man within two or three years.

His journey involved travel by sleigh to Samara through a temperature of twenty degrees below zero, and where the slightest wind would cut right through him to the bone. He determined to be utterly impervious to the elements. First came three pairs of the thickest stockings drawn high above the knee, over them a pair of fur-lined shoes, which in their turn were inserted into leather goloshes, his feet being finally deposited in a pair of enormous cloth boots reaching up to the thigh. Previously he had donned a pair of thick pants and trousers. A heavy flannel vest and then a shirt covered by a thick wadded waistcoat were enveloped in a huge fur coat which reached to his heels. His head was muffled in a thick cloth cap which reached down to protect his throat.

He had been informed that he would encounter wolves, but none came near to him, though he was ready and eager for their onslaught. Trying to cross an ice-hole in a river, Burnaby listened to the conversation of the onlookers. One said that he was too fat, another that he was too awkward, the other that he could jump it himself. Burnaby turned to them and said that if they continued their conversation they would probably jump either over or in, for he was thinking of throwing one of them across to discover the exact distance and depth. This sharp remark had the desired effect. With the aid of a pole he jumped over whilst his companions were dragged through on the sleigh.

Farther on it became necessary for Burnaby to hire another sleigh, and a coffin-shaped vehicle was driven up for his inspection.

Burnaby discovered that one of its runners was cracked and unfit for the journey, but its owner used all his eloquence to prove that it was advantageous to have a damaged runner. He seemed surprised when Burnaby remained obdurate, demanding that it be repaired. Driven back by a snowstorm, Burnaby was subjected to much curiosity by other travellers as to his identity. A railway inspector announced that a royal personage was coming through the town shortly and Burnaby must be that person. The Englishman produced his passport and was then identified as a Greek! When at last he was able to move on he found that his sleigh driver was more than usually surly for a Russian, because he had been taken away from the woman he had just married. He made the sleigh jolt so uncomfortably that Burnaby purposely kicked the driver in the ribs, who in turn laid the blame (with his whip) on the horses. Nevertheless, Burnaby believed that one could always get more from a servant by kindness than by force.

The country from Orsk onwards for a hundred miles was a dazzling, glaring sheet of white, softening as the sun sank into the west into a vast melancholy-looking ocean. A picture of desolation which wearied by its utter loneliness and appalled by its immensity.

After much trouble in securing horses, he had forgotten to put on his gloves, and took his seat in the sleigh with each hand folded in the sleeve of its fellow, the fur forming a muff and protecting his hands from the cold. He fell fast asleep and his unprotected hands slipped out into the biting east wind, now doubly dangerous owing to the movement of the sleigh. In a few minutes he awoke feeling an intense pain as though his hands had been plunged into some corrosive acid which was eating his flesh from the bones. His finger nails were blue as were his fingers and the backs of his hands, whilst his wrists and the lower part of his arms were waxen in colour. There was no doubt but that he was severely frost bitten. He made his servant rub the skin with snow for several minutes, during which time the pain was gradually ascending his arms whilst the lower portions became dead to all feeling.

Nazar announced that they must get on quickly to the next station, which was seven miles away. The pain by that time had become more acute than anything Burnaby had yet experienced. He learned that cold attacked people in two ways, either by inducing sleep, from which there was no awaking, or by consuming them limb by limb as though over a slow fire. All the time perspiration was streaming down his forehead and his body was



feeling as though it were ablaze. The agony of each yard of those seven miles was indescribable.

At the station he met three Cossacks to whom he showed his hands. They hurried him to a room, bared his arms and plunged them to the shoulder in a tub of ice and water. He felt no sensation and the limbs, now of a blue colour, floated helplessly in the water.

"Brother, it's bad; you will lose your hands!" said the elder Cossack, shaking his head sorrowfully.

"If we can't get back the circulation," remarked another, "they will drop off."

Nazar brought a bottle of naphtha, and the Cossacks, taking the arms from the icy water, began to rub them with the spirit. The skin peeled under their horny hands. Presently a faint tickling pervaded the elbow joints and Burnaby flinched.

"Does it hurt?"

"A little."

"Capital."

After continuing the friction until the flesh was almost flayed away, they suddenly plunged his arms back into the water, and the pain was now very acute once more. The Cossacks said that the more it hurt the better chance he had of saving his hands. Prostrated by the physical shock, Burnaby staggered to the sofa to rest. His arms were inflamed, the spirit having penetrated the raw flesh. It was some weeks before he completely recovered.

A salt breeze was blowing straight in their faces as they neared the Sea of Aral, and they arrived at Kasala about the time of the Russian Christmas.

There was precious little accommodation obtainable in Kasala at Christmas. Sent to a dirty lodging house, all that was available, Burnaby was informed that the rooms, as well as all the passages, were full.

"Do you know of another lodging house?"

"No—go with God, brother!" And the door was slammed in his face. He drove to the fort and was given excellent accommodation by the Russian officers, including a much-needed bath. He had found that Central Asians could not understand Englishmen wanting so much water for bathing; they assumed that Burnaby's race must be very dirty!

They resumed their journey, and sometimes their food was frozen *en route*. Even their bread had to be thawed in an oven before it could be eaten. One of Burnaby's drivers was so hungry that he ate a four-pound loaf at a meal. Burnaby's servant Nazar

was indignant with the Turcoman guide for burying his head in the saucepan to consume the soup. He offered him a spoon. The Turcoman refused, saying that it tasted better if eaten in his own peculiar manner. To make the guide rise in time to start, hot embers had to be placed on him.

At last Burnaby arrived within a day's journey of Khiva. He had been told to go first to the fort, but rightly thinking that if he did so he might not be allowed to get into Khiva, he determined to go to the town first. The only way to make the guide change his plan was to hint that he would buy a horse from his brother, whose place was along the Khiva route. As the one irresistible thing to a Turcoman is a horse deal, the guide took the risk and led the way direct to Khiva, which was to prove the loveliest place Burnaby had visited.

The traveller found that he must send a courier ahead to announce his coming to the khan. A scribe was found who was reputed to write "beautiful things so soft and sweet that they were like the sound of sheep bleating in the distance."

As they approached they were met by a "moon-faced girl" who, for good looks, would have held her own against any European belle; perhaps she was the daughter of a captured Persian. When Burnaby said that he wanted to buy a sheep, she recovered from her shyness and ran forward like a hare to catch one, seized her victim by one foot, and turned him over on his back. She gave a clear ringing laugh and then went through in pantomime the operation of cutting the captive's throat. The slight shadow of sentiment that had been created in Burnaby's mind by her beautiful face became rapidly effaced as he saw how eager she was to perform the part of a butcher.

As they neared the city they found that the Russians were very unpopular there; but when it became known that Burnaby was an Englishman the attitude of the Khivans changed to friendliness. When Burnaby described a railway on which ran an iron horse, his host said it was a miracle. Veiled women, sitting past the little cavalcade in the street, took sly glances at him. Three hundred people followed Burnaby to the barber's shop to watch him being shaved. The people behind, who could not see the performance as well as those ahead, called to them to sit and let them enjoy the spectacle. At each movement of the barber's wrists the razor tore out those hairs that it was too blunt to cut. The delighted onlookers roared with laughter, especially when the customer's cheek was gashed.

The khan's officers came out to meet Burnaby and kept the crowd away with whips. One of the Khivans asked him why he was single, and he replied that he could not be a traveller if he had a wife. He was told that his wife could be left behind locked up, as the Khiva merchants did with their wives.

"In my country wives are not locked up when their husbands are absent," said Burnaby.

"What a marvel. Suppose one of them is unfaithful?"

"The husband goes to a judge and gets a divorce."

"But doesn't he cut her throat?"

"No, he would be hanged."

"What a country! We manage things better in Khiva."

At the market place was the gallows on which all thieves were executed. Murderers were killed like sheep, their throats cut from ear to ear.

Burnaby was provided with a vapour bath by an attendant who threw buckets of water on hot flagstones, and another over the visitor. At dinner his manner of eating with a knife and fork astonished everybody. One observer, trying to imitate the proceedings, ran the fork into his cheek, to the amusement of the rest.

Burnaby found that the khan was by no means the fearsome butcher that the Russians had envisaged. He was kindly and hospitable. His throne was a large tent of a dome-like shape placed in the inner courtyard of his palace. He was reclining against some pillows and seated on a handsome Persian rug. Burnaby was told to sit beside him while they talked in Russian. Tea was brought in, and the khan asked how big was the British Empire. Burnaby produced a map, and the khan put his hand on India which he said was not so big as Russia, which used up both his hands. He also warned Burnaby that Russia might one day want India. Then he asked why England did not help him when he sent to them for assistance against Russia, and Burnaby explained that it was because we had a rotten government, which had since been changed.

"Can your queen have her subjects' throats cut?"

"Not without trial."

This information, apparently, did not enhance his opinion of the British monarchy.

The interview ended with the khan lamenting that Russia took so much money as tribute from his country.

A messenger now came to Burnaby from the Russian fort, telling him to call there for a telegram which was, as he feared, from the

Duke of Cambridge, ordering him to return to England. The Russians had used diplomacy to have him recalled. But not, he told the officer in command, before he had seen Khiva the beautiful!

The khan was very annoyed that he had to leave so soon, but gave him a parting present, a long robe, equal in Khiva to the Order of the Garter in England.

The book which Burnaby wrote describing his ride to Khiva, when it was published in England, created a sensation, and added greatly to his fame. He was marked down for advancement. But it was not until a few years later, when he was a member of the relief expedition sent to aid the man whom he admired most, that he was named for an important post. He was with General Stewart in the march across the desert to the Nile, where Gordon's ships awaited the little British force. That expedition was consistently unlucky, for it failed to relieve Khartoum, and it lost both its first and second in command—General Stewart and Colonel Burnaby. Yet its achievement at Abu Klea will never die.

Ten thousand Dervishes awaited the coming of one thousand five hundred British troops. Marching as a square, the British were prepared for the onslaught. Burnaby's duty was to protect the rear, the danger point, for it presented the only opening to the square. He kept his men from firing on the onrushing fanatical horde until the Dervishes were within one hundred and fifty yards, and so enabled most of his skirmishers to get back to shelter; but he himself, brave as a lion, a tempting mark for the enemy, refused to retreat as his left flank fell back.

Seeing that some of his skirmishers were still hard-pressed, he dashed to their rescue, shooting many Arabs as he went. A sheik charged him but was shot down. More spearmen rushed forward and one of them thrust a blade into Burnaby's throat. Still smiling, Burnaby fought gallantly on. Another Arab ran his spear through the colonel's shoulder but was himself killed as he did so. Then Burnaby received another wound in his throat, was thrown from his saddle and surrounded by spearmen. Nevertheless, he jumped to his feet again and slashed about him. But his prodigious strength now gone, he fell into the arms of his weeping servant.

Severely wounded, he was still alive. He lived to hear the shouts of victory and was satisfied. Just then his friend, Lord Binning, came running up, and Burnaby pressed his hand in farewell. Had he lived longer he would have rejoiced to know that every Dervish who penetrated that British square had been slain

and that the rest of the ten thousand who attacked ~~the~~ one thousand five hundred British had been completely routed.

In the prime of life this most gallant adventurer died ~~as~~ he would have wished, for he once observed: "There is one ~~prayer~~ in the Litany which I never repeat."

"And what is that?"

'From . . . sudden death good Lord deliver us.'

*A few days later his idol, Gordon, was slain in like manner at Khartoum.*

The two were to have been photographed shaking hands on the steps of the palace at Khartoum as Gordon was relieved.

But it was not to be. A double blow of fate deprived England of her two noblest adventurers of the Sudan.

# EXPLOSION AT SEA

By

DE MONTAUBAN

SINCE I have so often felt the malignant influence of the stars presiding over the seas, and by adverse fortune lost all the wealth which, with so much trouble and care, I had amassed together, it should be no source of pleasure recalling to my memory the disasters that befell me previous to the close of the last expedition. But the desire of serving both the public and individuals, and of showing the king my attachment to his service, induced me to communicate my observations to M. de Philipeaux. There he might likewise discover with what eagerness I penetrated to the most remote colonies of our enemies, in order to destroy them, and ruin their trade. I am unwilling to swell this relation with all the voyages I have made, and my adventures on various coasts of America, during twenty years. To these I could add my expedition in 1691, when I ravaged the coast of Guinea, went up the river Sierra Leone, and took a fort from the English mounting twenty-four pieces of cannon, which I burst, to render them unserviceable. But I shall here confine myself to the particulars immediately preceding and subsequent to the explosion of my vessel.

In the year 1694, after having ravaged the coast of Caragua, I stood to the windward towards St. Croix, where I had information of an English fleet of merchantmen, homeward bound, with a convoy. In the latitude of Bermuda Islands they appeared, bearing directly toward me, without any apprehensions of danger; whereupon I speedily attacked their convoy, called the *Wolf*, and took her, as also two merchantmen; but the rest made their escape during the engagement. While carrying my prizes to France, I fell in with an English ship of sixteen guns, bound from Spain for England, which, after a short encounter, struck her colours. She was sold at Rochelle, and I then carried my three other prizes to Bordeaux, in September, 1694, and presently sought out purchasers for them. Meantime, my crew, who had been long absent from France, indulged themselves in every extravagance, as some compensation for the fatigues they had undergone. Both the merchants and their hosts advanced them money without hesitation on the reputation of their wealth, and their share of such valuable prizes.

They spent the night in such amusements as best pleased their fancy, and the whole day in traversing the town in masquerade. They caused themselves to be carried in chairs with lighted torches at noon-day; and the consequence of their indiscretion and debauchery was the death of several of their number.

Having replaced my crew with young men, whom I trained to arms with constant care and practice, and re-victualled my ship, which carried thirty-four guns, I left Bordeaux in February, 1695, intending to make a voyage to the coast of Guinea. We cruised about the Azores and the Canary Islands in quest of Dutch vessels, but without success, and then bore away for the Cape de Verd Islands, where two English ships were seen at anchor in the road of the Isle of May. I sent out my boat to reconnoitre what they were, and received information of their carrying about thirty guns each. I therefore resolved to board them, and for that purpose stood nearer in; but they, suspecting my design, did not think fit to wait for my arrival, but making all ready, cut their cables, and made their escape. I pursued them all day; and having lost sight of them on the approach of night, returned to the road from which they departed, to take up their anchors and cables left behind, and to sink their boats also lying there.

We sailed for St. Vincent, one of the Cape de Verd Islands, to caulk the vessel, and likewise to take in wood and water. Here I learnt that there were two English vessels carrying between twenty and thirty guns each at the Isle of Fuego. I sailed in quest of them, but they were gone. Then I steered for the coast of Guinea, and at Cape Three Points met a Dutch frigate, of thirty-two guns, cruising at sea. She directly stood towards me to know what I was; and as I also had discovered her, and was in hopes of coming to a close engagement, I hoisted Dutch colours, to avoid creating any alarm. When she came within gunshot I hoisted French colours, and made a signal for her to strike. Instead of doing so, she boldly gave me a broadside, and at the same time received one from my ship. The engagement, thus commenced, continued from morning until four in the afternoon, without our being able to get the weathergage, or advance near enough to use musketry, which is the chief kind of arms in similar vessels. Neither could I prevent her from availing herself of the wind to anchor under the fort of Cape Three Points, where two other Dutch ships lay, one of fourteen, the other of twenty-eight guns. Expecting that all three would come out to fight me, I lay off and on nearly a whole day, and even anchored within a league, in hopes

that they might come to take their revenge. This, however, they declined; and a small Portuguese ship soon after told me, that they had forced another Frenchman to leave the coast.

Satisfied, therefore, that the enemy would not fight, and not deeming it advisable to attack them under the cannon of the forts, I determined to go to Cape Lopez, and to Prince's and St. Thomas's Isles. On the passage thither I captured an English twenty-gun ship, with three hundred and fifty negroes on board, and ivory and wax. The captain said he had come from Ardra, one of the chief towns of Guinea, which stands on the seaside, and is the residence of a prince who has extensive dominions. There he had taken in five hundred and fifty negroes; but some had been killed because others mutinied against him, and made their escape to land in his boat. In sight of Prince's Isle I took a small Brandenburg vessel, mounting eight guns, and carrying sixty men. She cruised about this latitude, taking all the barques she could fall in with, and without distinction of nation or colours. I afterwards went into port to clean my ship, which greatly required it, and to free myself of the English prize. Here I sent her to be condemned at St. Domingo in the West Indies; but I understood that she was re-taken by some English men-of-war before Little Goava. Meantime, that my men might not be idle, I ordered my officers to employ them in careening the vessel, while I myself embarked in the Brandenburg ship with ninety men, and went on a cruise for six weeks on the coast of Guinea.

Meeting with no enemy, I returned to Prince's Isle, and got my own vessel victualled, after which I weighed anchor and sailed for the island of St. Thomas, there designing either to sell or barter the Brandenburg. I exchanged her for some provisions, because I had not enough to serve me during a cruise on the coast of Angola, where I meant to spend five or six months, to avoid three English men-of-war fitting out at the same town in Guinea. Their purpose was to come in quest of me about the island of St. Thomas, where they thought I was cruising. Leaving St. Thomas, I saw a ship at anchor, and then chased her a long time. But I could not prevent her getting ashore on the Isle of St. Omers, and being staved to pieces, by which I lost a hundred and fifty pounds of gold dust.

We next sailed for the coast of Angola, two hundred and fifty leagues on the other side of the line, and arrived there on September 22. When within three leagues of the Port of Cabinda, we understood there were two English ships with negroes in that



place; therefore, being leeward of the port, I bore out to sea, in hopes of recovering it next day by the south-west wind, which usually blows to the land. When day broke, I saw a ship with English colours bearing down upon me, which I did not immediately suppose a man-of-war. Some time after, however, I discovered that she carried no less than fifty-four guns. I used all my art to deceive her; and with that view, hoisted Dutch colours, that I might approach her the more easily, while she, on her part, was not behind hand in deluding me, and endeavoured to come up with me by firing guns from time to time to assure me of her friendship. When I became sensible of the enemy's design, I made a show of waiting until she came up, and sailed but very slowly, that I might make her believe my ship was heavily laden, or that I was encumbered for want of sails and hands; and in this manner we mutually conducted ourselves from daybreak until ten in the forenoon. The English vessel still continued to fire a gun from time to time, to assure me that she was my friend. But finding at last that I did not answer her in the same manner, and now being within cannon shot, she gave me one whole ball, which made me instantly hoist French colours, and return the salutation.

The English captain on this, without further hesitation, gave me two broadsides, which I received, and did not return a shot—though they killed seven men—because I was in hopes if it was possible to get nearer, to disable him from leaving. Thus I endeavoured to get within musket-shot, desirous that he might have an opportunity of showing his courage by boarding; as I could not so well do the same by him, being to leeward. At last, having approached by degrees within musket-shot, a great number of my people, purposely concealed on deck, was discovered, and so he briskly continued, that the enemy began to flap. In the meantime, the crew of the English ship, consisting of above a hundred men, seeing the effect of their cannon fail, resolved to board us, which they did with a great shout, and threatening us no quarter if we did not surrender. Their grappling-irons catching our stern, their own ship ran on the bowsprit, and carried away. Observing the enemy to be thus hampered, my men, using a great many smartly, that in an hour and a half, presently after they were driven below decks for quarter. I therefore made signals with their hats off, crying, I thereupon ordered my men to cease firing, while I made some of to get into their boats and come on!

my own men leap into their ship and seize her, in order to prevent a surprise.

I already rejoiced within myself in capturing so considerable a prize; and the more so as, after having taken her, which was the guard-ship of the coast, and the largest belonging to the English in these seas, I should be in a condition to attack any man-of-war that I should meet, and make prizes still greater. My crew were no less satisfied than myself, and were executing their work with much alacrity. But the enemy's powder suddenly taking fire from a match purposely left burning by the captain, who hoped to escape in his two boats, both the vessels blew up with a most dreadful explosion. To describe the horrible spectacle is impossible; the spectators were themselves the actors in the bloody scene, hardly knowing whether they beheld it or not, and so confounded as to be unable to judge of what was passing. The reader must figure to himself our horror at two ships blowing up above two hundred fathoms into the air, where there was formed, as it were, a mountain of fire, water, and wreck. The awfulness of the explosion below, and the cannon going off in the air; the rending of the masts and planks; the tearing of the sails and cordage, added to the cries of the men;—these things I say must be left to the imagination of the reader, and I shall only describe what befell myself.

When the ship first took fire, I was on the fore-castle giving orders; and was thus so far up on the deck, that it was the height alone, as I conceive, that saved me from being involved in the wreck of the ships, where I must have infallibly perished. I fell back into the sea, and remained a considerable time under water, without being able to gain the surface. At last, struggling like one afraid of being drowned, I got up and seized a piece of a mast which I found near at hand. I called to some of my men, whom I saw swimming around me, and exhorted them to take courage, as we might yet save ourselves, if we could fall in with any of the boats. What gave me more distress at this moment than even my own misfortune, was seeing two half bodies, still with some remains of life, rising from time to time to the surface of the water, and then disappearing, leaving the place dyed with blood. It was equally deplorable to behold many limbs and fragments of bodies, spitted, for the greater part, on fragments of wood. At last, one of my men, having met with a boat, almost entire amidst all the wreck, swimming in the water, informed me that we must stop some holes which were in it, and endeavour to take out the

yawl lying on board. Fifteen or sixteen of us, each supported by a piece of wood, nearly reached the boat, and attempted to disengage the yawl; which we at length effected. All then went on board, and after getting there, saved the principal gunner, who had his leg broken in the engagement. Then, taking up three or four oars, or pieces of board for the purpose of oars, we sought out something to make a small mast and a sail; and having prepared all things as well as we possibly could, committed ourselves to the protection of Divine Providence, who could alone give us life and deliverance.

Whenever I had done working, I found myself entirely besmeared with blood, flowing from a wound which I had received in my fall. Having washed the wound, we made a dressing out of my handkerchief, and a bandage from my shirt to bind it on. The same was done to the others, who had been also wounded; and, meanwhile, our boat sailed on without making the land, or even knowing whither we were going. What was worse, we had no provisions, and had already spent a considerable time in fasting. One of the men, cruelly tormented with hunger and thirst, died of drinking salt water; and most of the rest constantly vomited, probably from the quantities of water swallowed by them when in the sea. As for myself, I suffered long, and swelled to a surprising degree; but I ascribe the recovery of my health to a quartan ague which seized me soon after. All my hair, face, and one side of my body were burnt with powder; and I bled at the mouth, nose, and ears. I know not whether this was the effect of the powder, by swelling up the vessels containing the blood of our bodies, to such an extraordinary extent, that the ends of the veins open and let it out, or whether it is occasioned by the great noise and violent motion in the same organs. But let it happen which way it will, there was no room here for a consultation of physicians, considering that we were dying of hunger; neither had we time to inquire what became of the English, when we could hardly save ourselves. With the help of oars, our course was directed up a current, which we knew came from the Port of Cabinda; but, the wind being against us, we could not make the port, and were obliged to attempt getting to Cape Corso, twelve leagues from Cape Catherina, where we were unable to land, on account of a bar which renders that part of the coast inaccessible. Hunger made us alter our design, and forced us to vanquish the obstacles opposed by nature; therefore we, with much difficulty, ran ashore in spite of the bar, trusting to find negroes who would supply us with provisions.

One of our number speedily landed in quest of something to eat, and fortunately discovered some oysters, adhering to the branches of trees in a lagoon, of which he returned to give us notice. Here we spent two days, and I divided my men into three parties, sending them up the country to seek for victuals and houses, with orders to return the same evening to the boat. But we could neither find habitations nor any indications of men dwelling there. We saw nothing but large herds of buffaloes, which fled so fast that we could not possibly get near them; therefore, after spending the day in this manner unsuccessfully, we came back to the boat to eat oysters, and resolved to sail for Cape Corst on the day following. To leeward of the Cape there is a large port, where ships sailing that way put in for wood and water. The negroes inhabiting the country, having notice of the arrival of vessels by the firing of cannon, come down with provisions, to barter for brandy, knives and hatchets. They are under the necessity of living at a distance from the sea, because all the coast is marshy.

As soon as we reached Cape Corso we heard a great noise from the negroes, who came hither to sell wood to the ships lying at anchor in the port. I looked for some one among them whom I might recognize; they having often brought me wood and refreshments in the course of my former voyages, I was in hopes to find some of them who should know me again. But though acquainted with several, it was impossible to persuade them that I was Captain Montauban, so much had my late misfortune disfigured me; and the whole supposed me an impostor. Understanding a little of their language, I told them I was ready to die with famine, and prayed them to give me something to eat; but my requests were vain; so I solicited them to conduct me to Prince Thomas, who was son to the king of the country, in hopes that he might recollect the favours I had formerly shown him. I carried all my people along with me, and first reached the dwellings of negroes, who gave us bananas to eat; and next day arrived at the prince's dwelling. But I was in so poor a condition, that I could not make him recognize me, either by signs or by speaking in his own language, and also Portuguese, which he understood perfectly well. Formerly, going together to battle, he observed a scar on my thigh, from a wound by a musket-ball; and now he said that he must know whether I were truly Captain Montauban; that if I were not, he would cut off my head. He then asked whether I ever had a scar from a musket-shot in my thigh, and on my showing it to him, he embraced me, expressing his sorrow to see me in this

condition. He immediately caused victuals to be distributed among my men, and divided them into several habitations, with strict orders to the negroes with whom they were quartered, to treat them with the greatest care; and as for myself, I always lived with him. When I was a little recovered, he promised to conduct me to the king, his father, who lived five or six leagues off, that is, ten or twelve from the seaside. I signified my sense of his consideration, and requested his permission to take my people along with me, and likewise some pieces of clothing, that we might put ourselves in decent attire to appear before so great a prince.

Three days thereafter we departed in a large canoe, and passed by the river of Cape Lopez; for the country is so full of marshes that the journey cannot be made by land. The king lived in a village consisting of three hundred huts, covered with palm leaves, where he kept his wives and kindred, and also some other negro families whom he favoured. I was lodged with Prince Thomas, and my men were distributed into other habitations. We found all the people in great lamentation, because their chief priest had died that day; and they were to begin the funeral obsequies, which continued seven days for those of such high rank. The deceased was held in universal esteem and veneration, and looked on as a holy man. As the king is in mourning during the whole funeral ceremony, he sees nobody while it lasts; and Prince Thomas desired me not to leave my dwelling to visit him, this being the custom of the nation. Nevertheless, I went to inspect the funeral ceremony, where I beheld nothing except a great concourse of people standing round the dead body. Meantime I was well fed by the orders of the prince, who had gone to visit his father; and so were my people. I was supplied with bananas, elephant's flesh, and river fish. At the termination of the eight days, Prince Thomas returned to carry us before his father, whom I found to be a well-made negro, of large stature, and about fifty years old. To do me the greater honour, he advanced some steps out of his house to meet me, supported by four or five women, and guarded by several negroes, armed with lances and muskets, which they discharged from time to time. Several drums and trumpets preceded him, and also several standards. His only covering was a piece of white and blue striped cotton stuff, wrapped about part of his body.

The king gave me many demonstrations of his friendship; he stretched out his hand to me, saying it was the first time he had done so to any man; and sitting down at his door, desired me to take the place on one side of him, and his son the other.

He asked several questions concerning the greatness and power of the king my master; and when I told him that he had alone waged war against the English and Dutch, whom he himself had seen at Cape Lopez, and also with the Germans and Spaniards, who were more potent nations than the English and Dutch, he expressed himself pleased with my account, and proposed to drink the king of France's health. He was immediately served by his wives with palm wine in a great crystal glass. As soon as he began to drink, the negro men and women lifted up their right arm, and in silence held it in that posture until he had done drinking. Then the drums and trumpets flourished, and the muskets, or I should rather say fuses, were discharged.

On informing Prince Thomas, at his own desire, that the king of France's name was Louis le Grand, he declared his wish that I should hold a child of his, seven or eight months old, to be baptized, and that I should name him Louis le Grand. He told me, likewise, that on my next voyage to this country he would send the child by me as a present to the king of France, to whose service he devoted him, being very desirous that he should be brought up according to the custom of the country and the court of so great a prince. I also engaged, on my part, that I should not fail to remind him of his promise, the first time I came to the coast of Guinea, that on my return to France I might be able to make the greatest present that could be made to the king, in presenting him with the son of Prince Thomas. "And assure him," said Prince Thomas, "that I am his friend, and that, if he has occasion for my services, I shall myself repair to France, with all the lances and musketry belonging to the king my father;" which was as much as to say, "with the whole force of the kingdom." The king then taking up the discourse, assured me that he would go thither in person if there was any need for it; and the whole negro men and women gave a loud shout, which was followed by a general discharge of fire-arms, and a flourish of drums and trumpets, and a kind of sham fight. The meaning of all this I could not comprehend, and it excited some alarm, until I saw the king drink the French king's health, with the same ceremonies as at first; his example was imitated by his son, and all the strangers ordered to do the like. He then ordered two cakes of wax to be brought, which he desired me to accept as a token of his friendship, and retired to his house.

We visited several villages in the vicinity, and most of the people, who had never beheld white men, crowded from all

quarters to see us, bringing more fruit, and also the flesh of elephants and buffaloes, than we could eat; it was a mark of the greatest consideration to supply us with elephants' flesh, as it is used by themselves at their feasts. Unable to comprehend what occasioned the difference of colour between our faces and their own, they frequently tried whether the white would rub off; and their anxiety in making this experiment was so great as sometimes to hurt us by it. When Prince Thomas observed their proceedings, he commanded that his attendants should suffer none of the rest to rub and scrape us with their fingers in that manner, and told those who came to see us that all strangers were as white as we were; and if negroes went into another country, that their colour would there seem as strange as ours did in Guinea. He was entertained by seeing the people running after us, as if we had been some strange animals, and I know not whether his distress to behold us thus incommoded with their importunities, or his amusement at their folly, predominated.

At last, after three days' travelling and diversion, the prince carried me back to take leave of his father. The king caressed me greatly, and made me promise to visit him on my first return to Guinea. We then embarked in canoes, and next day arrived at Prince Thomas's village, where I experienced the same treatment from him as before. Here he resumed the subject of his son's baptism; and as these people professed Christianity, he sent to Cape Lopez for a Portuguese priest, who came in two days. The prince named him Louis le Grand, as he had before declared his intention of doing. A negro woman, one of his relations, stood godmother, and I stood godfather. This woman was called Antonia, and I was told that she had been so named at her baptism by the wife of a Portuguese captain. The ceremony was performed with all the magnificence possible, and such as negroes alone could display.

Two or three days afterwards, information came of the arrival of an English ship at Cape Lopez; and I requested the prince's permission to go on board, that I might return to my own country; but he was unwilling that I should commit myself to the hands of my enemies, and desired me patiently to await the arrival of some Portuguese vessels, in which I should sail. Meantime he went to Cape Lopez, there to exchange elephants' teeth, beeswax, and negroes, for iron, arms, and brandy, which occupied him ten or twelve days. On his return, he told me that a Portuguese ship had anchored at the Cape, and that his canoe should carry

me on board, as he had recommended me to the captain, and said that I should want nothing necessary for my voyage to Europe. I, therefore, collected all my men except two, who five or six days before had gone up the country, and I knew not where to find them. Having taken leave of the prince, we embarked in his canoes, and sailed for Cape Lopez. On arriving there, I found the Portuguese captain, an old friend, with whom I had become acquainted in the island of St. Thomas. Three days after I went on board we reached that island, the governor of which showed me and my men much civility, during a month that we were obliged to remain in the port. An English ship that had been out on the Gold Coast then came in; and on becoming acquainted with the captain, he made such offers as I could not refuse. He requested me to go on board of his ship, assuring me that I should find very good Jewish physicians in Barbadoes, who would cure my ailments. Thus I embarked with all my men in the vessel, notwithstanding the governor of the island stated many reasons for being suspicious of the Englishman, who was, nevertheless, as honest a man as any of his country. He was so civil as to give me his own cabin, and entertained me with everything agreeable and amusing he could devise, to solace my spirits for afflictions that I had from time to time endured.

Ten days after our departure from St. Thomas, we unfortunately lost our rudder in a storm, and were obliged to fit a spare topmast instead of it, which proved very detrimental to a voyage continuing no less than three months. Provisions began to be scarce before our arrival at Barbadoes, so that the allowance was reduced to three-fourths, and they were within three days of being quite exhausted. On reaching the island, the English captain waited on Colonel Russel, the governor, and related my engagement with the man-of-war at Angola, and the consequences attending it; whereupon he was much blamed for carrying me to Barbadoes. When he returned on board, he told me that the governor had prohibited him from allowing me to go on shore, under pain of death. The latter part, however, I did not at first learn from him, and he contented himself with only desiring me not to go ashore, lest it might excite the governor's suspicions. With this I promised punctual compliance, having little desire to see a place which I had known so long ago, and being unwilling to bring the captain into any trouble. Next day, several Jews who had been expelled from Martinique, having heard of my arrival, came on board, and finding me very much indisposed, sent some



physicians of their tribe to me, who said that I could not be cured without being carried ashore. They offered to solicit the governor's permission for me to live in the town, and I drew up a petition to him for the same purpose, promising not to stir out of my apartment until embarking again for Martinique. The Jewish physicians were themselves obliged to be security for me, and I was then conducted to the house of Mr. Jacob Lewis, where I was well attended to all the time of my residence.

Three days after my arrival, Colonel Russel sent a major to see me. He very civilly offered me his protection, and whatever could be conducive to the restoration of my health. Both the major and a captain of the garrison came to visit me from time to time, though, I apprehended, less with the design of learning the state of my health, than to ascertain when I should be in a condition to leave the island. Colonel Russel himself also visited me ten or twelve days after my arrival, to know whether I was as ill as had been reported; and seven or eight days subsequent to that, he came again, and caused me to be conveyed from the Jew's house to that of an English merchant, where, he said, I should find better accommodation. But I thought his design was that I might be more narrowly watched, and prevented from conversing with so many people. He came to see me the day following, when I returned him thanks for the civilities he had shown me; and that he might have no occasion to suspect my men, I prayed him to shut them up in the citadel, that they might not run about the island, and also to prevent them from making their escape. He answered that he would attend to it, but I must understand they were prisoners of war as well as myself. I said I was aware of it, and thought myself fortunate in having fallen into his hands, adding, however, that the English captain who had brought me to Barbadoes, engaged that neither I nor any of my men should be detained; that it was from reliance on his faith so given, and the tenders of service he made, I had embarked. Then I requested the governor to grant me and my men our liberty, promising that I should ever be mindful of the favour, either by restoring such prisoners as I might take, or by paying him such a ransom as he required. "No," replied the governor, "I will neither have your ransom nor your prisoners; you are too brave a man for me not to compassionate your numerous misfortunes; and I desire that you will accept of these forty pistoles to supply your present necessities." He then presented me with a purse, which he had doubtless brought on purpose; and on leaving me, said he was about to give orders to

collect my men together. After being somewhat recovered, I intimated to the governor, by the officer who daily came to visit me, that I was desirous of embarking in the first vessel bound for Martinique. In three days a barque arrived, which the Count de Blenac, governor of the French islands, had sent here respecting an exchange of prisoners. Colonel Russel gave me intimation of it, saying I might prepare to depart. I was thereupon permitted to go to his house, and thank him in person for all the civilities he had shown me. He told me that he regretted the laws of warfare restrained him from allowing me greater liberty than he had done, and prayed me to use the English kindly who might fall into my hands. I embarked in the French vessel, but I could find no more than two of the crew whom the governor had formerly sent to me, and they declared that they knew nothing of what was become of the rest.

Arriving at Martinique, I related my adventures to M. de Blenac, who insisted on my living with him during the whole period of my residence there; and he frequently made me give him an account of my engagement with the English man-of-war. At last, finding an opportunity of procuring a passage for me to France, he sent for the captain of a vessel bound thither, and recommended me to him. He would likewise have written letters to France in my favour, but he was taken so very ill, that he could not write, and died on June 10. I regretted his death very much, for many reasons. He was a man who delighted to serve every one, and felt for the misfortunes of those who were persecuted by fate, as I had been; who offered a favour before it was asked, who was endowed with courage, and skilful in maritime affairs, and in high esteem with the king for his integrity, wisdom, justice, as also the service he had rendered to his country.

The day after the death of M. Blenac, I embarked in the *Virgin*, a vessel belonging to Bordeaux, and had a quick passage thither. I arrived, impressed with many and contradictory sentiments. I know not whether I have bid adieu to the sea, or whether I shall go out again to be revenged on the English, who have done me so much mischief; whether I shall traverse the ocean in quest of a little wealth, or rest in quiet, and consume what my relations have left me. Men have a strange propensity to undertake voyages, just as they have to gaming. Whatever adversity befalls them, they trust that at length prosperity will come, and therefore they continue to play on; so it is with us at sea; for whatever accident we meet with, we hope to indemnify our losses.

# GALLIPOLI ADVENTURE

By  
R. D. PAUL

ON the morning of April 21, 1915, the Bay of Mudros in the Island of Lemnos presented an astonishing sight. More than one hundred and fifty ships were there assembled, ranging in size from such armed giants of the sea as the *Queen Elizabeth*, the mightiest vessel in Britain's navy, to the tiny fishing vessels of the islanders.

Packed closely in the holds and even on the decks of this imposing, if ill-assorted armada, was an army of some eighty thousand men drawn from all over the earth. Innumerable dialects of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales mingled with the nasal drawl of Australia and New Zealand. Parisian French rose staccato above the liquid roll of Urdu and guttural clicks of West Africa. The Tower of Babel was afloat. Seldom has a more polyglot population inhabited a more motley citadel, and they were embarked upon as hazardous, as daring an adventure as any in all the dread annals of battle: they were foredoomed to failure. Yet in that failure they were destined to write an epic of bloody heroism and sacrifice that all time will never erase from the pages of history.

The entry of Turkey into the Great War as an ally of the Central Powers, had gravely complicated the vital issues confronting the Allies. For Britain the danger lay in a terrible threat to the Suez Canal, that main artery of her life: for Russia, already reeling under the blows dealt her by Ludendorff and Hindenburg in the marshes of East Prussia, the danger lay in the extension of a struggle, already overwhelming, to a new territory, the Caucasus. If Russia collapsed, the two million and more German and Austrian troops pinned down on the eastern front could be hurled against the sorely tried British and French in the west. At all costs Russia had to be supplied with the sinews of war. The Black Sea can be entered from the Mediterranean by one narrow channel, known as the Dardanelles. That channel runs between the Asiatic shore of Turkey and the strip of land known as the Gallipoli peninsula. So long as that ribbon of water was in Turkish hands or was dominated by Turkish gunfire, neither guns nor shells could reach Russia.

The forcing of the Dardanelles Straits was therefore an imperative issue for Allied strategy. But there were other factors, concerned with politics and prestige, that were no less important in persuading the war councils of the west to such a desperate venture as was in contemplation on this fine April morning.

The historic city of Constantinople, situated on the northern shore of the Sea of Marmara, into which the Narrows of the Dardanelles debouched, was the focus of all Turkish power.

Such an event as the capture of Constantinople would have echoed across the world. The Balkans would have been electrified. It would have confirmed Bulgaria in a cautious neutrality: would have brought relief to hard-pressed Serbia, and Rumania and Greece, at this time vacillating, would have come in on the side of the Allies. New armies could have poured to the attack of an Austrian empire already hard hit. The Great War may well have been shortened by three years.

Estimates as to the preparedness of Turkey for war, the morale and ability of her troops and their leaders, the efficiency of their organization and the real powers of her defence, varied enormously.

Lord Fisher and those who felt with him, stressed the power of the Turkish forts and the defences of the Dardanelles. No fleet, he asserted, unsupported by a well-prepared land attack could ever force or hold the straits. What was needed was a land attack that could take the forts commanding those narrow waters, in rear, and thus clear a way for the Navy.

The issue was critical, for time pressed. Every minute of delay was dangerous. Turkey grew hourly in strength and preparedness, for she could not be blind to the appalling dangers of a British victory at the Dardanelles and must of necessity be straining every nerve to meet the inevitable attack.

Eventually it was decided no troops could be spared and that the Navy should act alone.

Early in March a proud array of ships of battle hammered the Turkish forts guarding the narrows; but in the moment of victory, when indeed the Turkish big guns had less than thirty rounds of ammunition left them apiece, three fateful mines altered the destinies of man by sinking three great British vessels. Naval critics on the spot and lay critics at home despaired of the Navy's success; then there occurred a delay of over four weeks, a delay pregnant with doom for the whole enterprise and at last, an army under Sir Ian Hamilton, was assembled and embarked. On the morning

of April 21, 1915, it lay ready in Mudros Bay to venture the assault of Gallipoli.

The Gallipoli peninsula stretches for some fifty miles south into the sea, like a queer handle to the mainland of Europe. At its broadest, just south of the town of Gallipoli on its eastern shore, it is more than fifteen miles wide. At its narrowest, its neck in the north where it joins the mainland, it is barely three and a half miles wide. This neck, known as the isthmus of Bulair, is of vital strategic importance to the whole, for were it seized and held the rest of the peninsula could be slowly strangled.

Most of the area is a maze of rugged mountains, arid and barren, except for hardy shrubs, and at nearly every point on its coastline towering cliffs rise sheer from the sea. Where these are broken by narrow bays, the beaches are but short strips entirely commanded by the hills above them. Innumerable ravines break up the land into fantastic contours, presenting terrible obstacles to progress. The four principal hill features bear names that are now historic. The northernmost is the semi-circle of hills six hundred or seven hundred feet high, enclosing Suvla Bay; further south are Sari Bair mountains, one thousand feet high; the Kilit Bahr plateau opposite the narrow, seven hundred feet high, and the mass of Achi Baba, seven hundred feet high, dominating the south-western tip of the peninsula.

From this last, the Turkish forts guarding the Narrows on both the European and Asiatic shores, could be commanded and its possession would give an attacking army and fleet the control of the straits.

It is clear that any attack on the peninsula could be launched only where beaches gave reasonable access. The cliffs were impregnable. Sir Ian Hamilton, in command of the expedition, decided eventually that there was only one practicable method of attack open to him; to land his men at the beaches on the southern and western edges of the peninsula and to fight his way steadily inland.

The deliberations preceding this decision were very grave. No one was deluded as to the terrible hazards involved. To land troops from open boats on to quite unprotected beaches in the face of a vigilant, resolute enemy well provided with machine-guns, was an unparalleled risk.

Surprise was out of the question. The Turks were well aware of the existence and location of the Allied Armada and the tragic indecision earlier in the year had afforded them ample time in

which to consolidate their defences. Under skilled German engineers they had laboured well and arduously. Bomb proof dugouts and trenches had been erected to command all the likely landing sites, and terrible lines of barbed wire had been stretched both along the sand and even under water at the edges of the beaches. The ranges were all marked to an inch, and the available field guns and field howitzers were well sited out of line of fire from attacking warships.

If the landing troops had had to meet the full weight of all the Turkish troops which had been detailed for the defence of the peninsula, success would have been out of the question. The commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces, the German general, Liman von Sanders, had at his disposal some sixty thousand troops. With these he could easily have thrown back any attempted landing over a comparatively narrow area, but although he was well aware that the attack was coming, he could not know at which point it would in fact be made.

In consequence, he had to be prepared to meet it anywhere: he divided his forces into three groups of twenty thousand men and fifty guns each. One group he retained on the Asiatic mainland near the ruined fort of Kum Kale: the second he held concentrated on the Bulair isthmus: and the third he distributed along the south and east shores of the peninsula.

It followed that in the event of a landing in force at any one of the three possible points, the Turkish detachment stationed there would have to resist unsupported the whole weight of the British attack for at least three days. Neither of the other groups could come to its assistance earlier than this.

Thus it will be seen that, in selecting the tip of the peninsula as the only possible point for his projected landing, Sir Ian Hamilton had chosen just that point where the available Turkish forces were most dispersed and in the worst case to offer a concentrated resistance. To that fact alone must be ascribed the eventual, though desperate, success of the landing.

The troops who were to take part in the landing consisted of part of the British Army in Egypt, being sixteen battalions of Australian and New Zealand troops, under the command of Sir William Birdwood, the East Lancashire Territorial Division, and a number of Indian troops. The spearhead of the British forces, however, was the 29th Division, built up of a number of celebrated English, Irish and Scots regiments of the regular Army. It was commanded by Sir A. Hunter-Weston.

Besides these troops there were the 63rd Royal Naval Division and a French contingent drawn principally from the *Armée Coloniale* and the celebrated Foreign Legion, under General d'Amade.

Sir Ian Hamilton's tactical arrangements were well conceived. He proposed to execute two feints: in the first the French contingent should effect a landing on the Asiatic shore near Kum Kale. This feint would not only pin down the Turkish forces stationed there but would also, by driving inland the Turkish shore batteries, protect his real attack, which was to be delivered on the tip of the peninsula, from being taken in half-rear by gunfire.

The second feint was to be made by the Royal Naval Division at the Bulair isthmus, with the intention of drawing off as many Turkish troops as possible from the peninsula itself, to the defence of the vital neck, across which all Turkish supplies must come.

The real attack was itself to consist of two separate ventures. In the first, the Australian and New Zealand divisions (very shortly to become immortal as the Anzacs) were to effect a landing on the promontory known as Gaba Tepe, situated on the south-west coast, and to strike inland across a low depression in the hills, to Maidos on the opposite side of the peninsula. If this attack was successful it would cut off all Turkish forces on the southern end of the peninsula as well as the enemy forts commanding The Narrows in the straits.

Meanwhile, the second venture should be launched by the 20th Division. Five separate beaches known by the letters S, V, W, X and Y, had been selected round the tip of the peninsula, and various units had been detailed for the attack. The immediate object was to seize the hill of Achi Baba which commanded the forts at the Narrows.

It was judged that whereas the first feint attack and the Anzac's real attack could both be conducted before dawn, the hazards of the second real attack were too serious to permit of operations in the dark. The attack on the beaches, therefore, was scheduled to start after daylight.

Moreover, good weather was absolutely essential for the whole enterprise. The landing of troops, guns, ammunition and all the myriad stores necessary to support an army of occupation could never be successfully carried out in the treacherous currents of those narrow waters unless the sea were quite calm. Should a storm blow up in the middle of the operations, the troops already landed would be marooned.

It was hoped that the guns of the great ships which were to accompany the transports, would be able to smash most of the Turkish positions and certainly to render an active, persistent



The scene of the Gallipoli landing

defence extremely difficult. But in the result the hope was never fulfilled. One of the greatest tragedies of the Gallipoli landing arose from the naval shortage of high-explosive shells. Had these been available a very different tale might have been in the telling in these pages. But they were not. Most of the ships had only



shrapnel shells available and against these the German engineers had made the Turkish defences wellnigh impregnable.

For three days the expedition waited, while with feverish energy final preparations were made.

At last, on the morning of Friday, April 23, the weather reports were favourable and the mighty fleet set out the following day on as perilous an adventure as any which has confronted man.

The Royal Naval Division was the first to come in contact with the Turkish defences. Steadily, with not a light showing, the transports steamed into Xeros Bay during the night of the 24th. At 5.30 a.m., just as dawn was breaking, the two escorting war-ships, *Dartmouth* and *Doris*, opened a furious bombardment on the Turkish lines. As the light grew, officers and men despaired of success. Great cliffs towered over the bay on all sides, offering perfect cover to any number of Turks who could enfilade any landing. All day long the guns of the ships thundered with no appreciable result: no landing party could ever have reached the shore in daylight and survived. It was decided to abandon the attempt until nightfall, when a platoon of the Hood Battalion was to try to reach the shore and by lighting flares and firing machine-guns and rifles, persuade the Turks that a serious attack was impending.

No one there, however, failed to realize that the chances of any of the party returning were terribly slender, and it was with thankfulness and admiration that the command accepted a heroic offer by Lieut.-Commander Freyburg, of the Royal Naval Division. This gallant officer volunteered to swim ashore and light flares.

Greased all over and painted black, he slipped into the water as darkness fell and set out on his swim. Before him he pushed a small raft bearing his flares, matches, a sheath knife and a revolver. For two hours in that early spring night he swam through the cold waters and finally beached his raft on the shore. Without delay he lit his flares and fired his pistol rapidly.

A terrible burst of machine-gun fire broke from the surrounding cliff, the water near him being whipped into spray by a myriad bullets. By a miracle he escaped and, running along the beach, plunged once again into the chilly sea.

Before him was inky blackness, for no ship dared to show a light, and he had nothing, except guesswork, to guide him. For another terrible two hours he swam on, and then, almost dead with cold and fatigue, he was picked up in the nick of time by one of the patrolling boats.

His exploit, which won him the D.S.O., was brilliantly successful. So convinced became Liman von Sanders of the peril of a British landing at Bulair, that despite the desperate plight of his forces on the southern end of the peninsula, he could not be persuaded to reinforce them by even one soldier from his troops guarding the isthmus, until the evening of the 26th.

Meanwhile, stirring events were transpiring some sixty miles to the south, where at Gaba Tepe the Anzacs had begun a surprise attack. The ships had reached the rendezvous position off the promontory punctually at one o'clock in the early morning of Saturday, April 25, and after the men had had a hot meal they fell in on deck.

It was believed (and rightly, as it happened) that surprise was more important than artillery preparation, and accordingly, in dead silence the men scrambled into the waiting boats from which they were to land. The arrangements provided for the successive landing of one thousand five hundred men at a time, and at 1.30 a.m. the first boats moved off. They were speedily taken in tow by the steam pinnaces, and the leading flotilla steamed away in the darkness towards the shore.

Just before daylight, at 4.50 a.m., the first boat grounded. As it did so a flare burst out on the hillside and a scattered burst of machine-gun and rifle fire broke out from the Turkish positions. The majority of the bullets in the first salvo fortunately went high, but numbers of men were hit as they leapt impetuously ashore and with admirable coolness formed up in rough line on the open beach.

As the grey light of dawn broke eerily over the sombre grey sea, the Australians charged across the sand, making for the bright flashes of fire breaking the dark shadow of the hills, flashes which marked the Turkish positions. For fear that a similar occurrence would give away the position of the landing troops to the enemy machine-gunners and riflemen, the Australians had been ordered not to fill the magazines of their rifles until daybreak.

It was grim, desperate, bloody work. With fixed bayonets the Australians panted forward, scaling the cliffs which hid the Turkish first line. Above the staccato barking of the machine-guns their progress was scarcely heard, and a swarm of stalwart, bronzed giants had crashed into and over the Turkish line before its defenders were fully aware of their presence.

No quarter was asked or given. Cold steel decided the issue. The Turkish defences were overwhelmed and the troops who were

still climbing the hill got some protection. But the Turkish second line, cunningly built into a cliff and protected from naval gunfire, was still intact, and, as the light improved, directed a terrible fire upon the boats and the men still struggling across the beaches.

The position was critical, daylight would rob the beaches of all protection. But the Australians in the van, scarcely waiting to recover their breath, were already pressing forward. Throwing down their packs they worked their way upward, sniping and sniped at, finishing off their progress with fierce bayonet charges. Nothing could stay that mad progress, neither wire nor bullets; and within two hours the Turkish second line was also overwhelmed. The landing was secured.

It had been won at surprisingly small cost. Casualties had been few and the Turkish defenders even fewer. For a moment the officers were incredulous of their good fortune and suspected a trap: daylight disclosed the explanation.

In the darkness, the boats had missed their objective and had reached not Gabe Tepe but a small cove to the north, then known as Ari Burnu, but now immortal as Anzac Cove. It lay under the shadow of the rugged mass of hills known as Sari Bair, and was so exposed that the Turks had never seriously anticipated a landing there. In consequence they had fortified it but lightly and only stationed a handful of pickets to defend it.

This error in direction, however fortunate from the point of view of the actual landing, proved more than serious. Instead of operating through a broad depression straight across the peninsula towards Maidos and being almost in direct contact with the forces landing on the southern tip, the Anzacs found themselves involved in the twisty, rocky ravines of Sari Bair, fighting across a confusing maze of hills and gullies every one of which could be, and was, stubbornly defended.

Yet the desperate and heroic resistance put up by the handful of Turkish troops could not seriously stay the advance of the Australians and New Zealanders, who every moment were reinforced by eager comrades landed on the beach.

Steadily they fought their way inland during the morning and by the early afternoon the whole of the leading Australian division, twelve thousand men in all, had been landed. The Turkish position seemed desperate: already white-faced messengers were arriving at Turkish headquarters, saying that all was lost. Yet by one of those master strokes of fate, success was snatched from this gallant enterprise in the moment of fulfilment.

It happened that one of the local Turkish commanders was a resolute officer known as Mustapha Kemal Bey, a man of destiny indeed: and in his handling of a wellnigh hopeless situation he showed those qualities by which he was destined, many years later, to win to leadership of a regenerated Turkey.

He was in command of the 19th Turkish Division, stationed in reserve at Chunuk Bair. By chance, fortunate indeed for the Turks, he had paraded his best regiment, the 57th, for routine manoeuvre practice at 5.30 in the morning of the twenty-fifth. As he moved forward north of Sari Bair at the head of his men, he saw about midday a straggling line of Turkish pickets coming over the hill. Questioning them, he learned for the first time that the Australians had landed. Instantly divining the deadly menace of the situation, he turned his men round and raced towards the scene of action. On his own responsibility he at once despatched orders for the 77th regiment to follow, and later called up yet a third and threw it into the struggle. The advance was halted just as it reached the summit of Sari Bair. The Australians, scattered, out of touch, exhausted, were suddenly confronted by splendid troops magnificently led. Field guns opened on them from unexpected directions and their valiant charges succeeded only in exposing them to attacks from the rear.

Outflanked and hard pressed, they fell back. Throughout the rest of that fateful day, the tide of battle swayed dizzily backwards and forwards. As one or another side received reinforcements so it would surge forward. After the initial check, the Australians again pressed on. Reinforced by their second division, by a number of field batteries and by the Indian troops, all of which were landed before midnight, they swept forward to a second attack.

Dreadful were the miniature battles fought in that wilderness of hills and valleys. Desperate and awful was the strife. Neither the Australians nor their enemies took prisoners, wounded or otherwise, and it was the bayonet rather than the bullet which was the arbiter of victory.

By nightfall, however, the Turkish reinforcements began to arrive in large numbers and the exhausted troops of Mustapha Kemal were succoured in the nick of time. Once more the attack flowed seawards, once more the weary Australians strove to hold up the foe, fighting bitterly to retain the ground they had regained on their second attack.

Exhausted, out-manceuvred, out-numbered, they were forced stubbornly to retreat. In the rear their commander viewed the

situation with growing concern. His leading units had been in continuous action for twelve hours: in the darkness across strange ground, neither relief nor munitions could easily be moved up. He saw his forces being driven inexorably back to the beach, an amphitheatre in which the Turks could slaughter them at their leisure. He felt that men could do no more. The venture he concluded, had failed.

Urgently he wired to Sir Ian Hamilton, advising re-embarkation and withdrawal: but the commander-in-chief gauged the temper of those hard-pressed, thirst-maddened Anzacs more accurately than their own commander. "Dig in and stick it out," he answered. And dig in and stick it out they did.

Countless epics of individual heroism had won those Anzacs and their Indian comrades a footing on Turkish soil. Countless more were to be written before finally they were withdrawn, many sad months later, from a battlefield which they had soaked in their blood. They endured appalling hardships, braved desperate dangers; they were doomed to ceaseless struggle. Yet all the power of Turkey did not suffice to tear from the grip of these men the small piece of territory on which they set their feet during these two April days.

But round Cape Helles, while the Anzacs fought and died on Sari Bair, was to be staged another battle, equally heroic and far more horrible, the Landing on the Beaches in which the 29th division won itself everlasting glory.

Although Sir Ian Hamilton hoped for great success from the Anzac thrust at Ari Burnu, he placed his chief reliance on the attack he proposed to launch at the southern end of the peninsula. Here, he believed, was the critical battle, and for it he had reserved his best trained troops and his most powerful ships. To aid it he had directed the feint landing of the French on the Asiatic shore.

This last, although chronologically later than the British landings round Cape Helles is in some respects logically prior to them and should be described first.

It was as hazardous as any of the other Gallipoli ventures. Some four thousand French soldiers were proposing to land on a low-lying shore defended by twenty thousand Turks and in the face of numerous field batteries and great fortress guns.

As the boats in which the Senegalese and Foreign Legion troops were crowded, were towed towards the shore in the small hours of the Sunday morning, a terrible fire burst upon them. Many boats were smashed to pieces, scarcely a man in the leading

flotilla escaped a wound. Resolutely, however, they steamed on into the mouth of the River Dumruk which takes its sluggish way across the most historic of all the world's great battlefields, the Plain of Troy. There, under the shadow of the ruins of the immortal city, with the ghosts of Greek and Trojan heroes thronging round them, these dauntless soldiers leapt ashore.

Hundreds fell: German and Turkish batteries far inland flung shell after shell in the line of their advance: terrible gaps were ripped in their ranks by a hail of machine-gun bullets. The survivors never faltered.

Charging forward they won their way at the point of the bayonet and, aided by the guns of the distant warships, drove the Turkish batteries steadily inland.

They had achieved their aim. All through that critical Sunday when the issue at the beaches hung in the balance, the Turkish forces round Kum Kale were far too preoccupied with this immediate threat to send reinforcements to Cape Helles; and the mainland batteries, whose fire might well have turned the tide of battle irretrievably against the British, poured their shells not on the struggling, helpless crowds thronging those beaches, but on this handful of French troops.

For nearly thirty-six hours they clung to the precarious hold; subjected every minute to a growing rain of shells and to the attacks of overwhelming infantry forces. Not until late in the morning of the Monday did they finally abandon their positions. Then, re-embarking, they crossed that shell-swept strip of water to reinforce the British troops on Beach S.

The five beaches selected as the points for the main British attack, were situated at irregular distances all round the end of the peninsula. Furthest west was Beach Y between the southern tip of the Sari Tepe promontory and the rugged cliff known as Gurkha Bluff. Next came Beach X, north of Cape Tekke, and between that and Cape Helles, Beach W. Round the end of the latter spit of land was Beach V, east of Sedd el Bahr and last of all was Beach S, situated in Morto Bay.

Here then, was the battleground, a nightmare terrain of low-lying exposed sand-stretches at the mercy of the sheltered defenders in the hills above them. They were, however, the only practicable landing places on the whole of the southern end of the peninsula and the Turks had spared no pains to make them impregnable.

Imagine the scene as the attack began! Across a calm blue sea as dawn broke on this fateful morning, steamed a host of

ships. Steadily they approached the shore at five different points, while far out at sea great guns boomed and tons of metal sped overhead to burst with shattering roar and clouds of acrid yellow smoke on the silent cliffs above the beaches. Steadily the transports drew nearer and the little boats from which the landings were to be made crept up alongside their great hulls. The beaches, their dreadful wire glinting cruelly, were still and silent.

At Beach Y on the extreme right of the Turkish line, where the defenders were least prepared for an assault, three light cruisers of shallow draft, the *Dublin*, the *Sapphire* and the *Amethyst*, resolutely steamed in close to the shore and at close range, plastered the cliffs with their four-inch and six-inch shells. So terrible was this direct fire that the deafened and reeling handful of Turks at this point were capable of offering very little resistance when a battalion of marines and the 1st King's Own Scottish Borderers leapt ashore from their boats and scaled the cliffs. The British troops rapidly established themselves securely, having lost not a man in the process.

They were fiercely attacked after nightfall by large enemy forces which they had drawn to their neighbourhood and were compelled to re-embark the next morning: but they had materially lightened the hostile pressure on the other beaches.

Similar bold naval tactics also secured a marked success a mile to the south at Beach X. Captain H. C. Lockyer, in command of H.M.S. *Implacable*, boldly manœuvred his ship to within five hundred yards of the cliffs. At 5.30 a.m. she opened a terrible fire at point blank range with her twelve-inch and six-inch guns. Nothing could withstand her salvoes.

Within a few moments most of the Turkish trenches had been smashed in and their few surviving defenders were in poor case to offer resistance. Yet when the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, closely followed by the 1st Border Regiment and the 1st Inniskillings, set foot on the beach as the bombardment ceased, the Turks put up a stubborn resistance. A resolute bayonet charge eventually settled the issue and the British troops were soon masters of the heights.

Once there, however, they came under a gruelling fire from Turkish guns in the village of Krithia. Stoically they held on while the position of the hostile battery was signalled to the *Implacable*. Her long guns swung slowly upwards, roared into flame and smoke for a few minutes, and far off, mangled shapes that had once been men lay sprawled across scrap-iron that had once been Turkish guns.

The invaders were free to dig themselves in and consolidate their hold. By nightfall they had established contact with the landing at Beach W.

Away at the other end of the line, at Beach S, equal success had attended the landing of seven hundred men of the 2nd South Wales Borderers. Although the war vessels had been unable to approach the shore so closely as at the other two beaches, their guns had kept the Turkish fire under and the men had got ashore with little loss.

As they landed, however, shrapnel swept the beach, thinning their ranks, but a short dash carried them to the comparative shelter of the cliffs and working their way round the shoulder of the spur on which were placed a number of guns known as De Tott's battery, they carried the position at the bayonet point. Although they suffered severe losses and were quite isolated from the other landings they clung on tenaciously, beating back several fierce counter-attacks delivered by the Turks, until they were relieved on the Monday by the French contingent from Kum Kale.

These three landings, however, were largely feints undertaken chiefly to confuse the Turks as to the exact point at which the British proposed to make their real thrust.

It was at Beaches W and V that Sir Ian Hamilton intended to effect his major lodgment. But the Turks were little deceived by the other attacks and fully expected the landings at the two main points.

How different was the tale at these two beaches! Beach W was a natural fortress of terrific strength. Round a wide, gently sloping strip of sand, ran a semi-circle of rugged hills to every point on which the whole beach was fully exposed. What nature had left undone German engineers had finished. Machine-gun nests, bomb proof gun emplacements, cleverly sited trenches, had been cut into the cliff face at every vantage point. The beach and the fringes of the water were a maze of wire entanglements festooned with trip-mines and grenades. The place was a death trap.

An ominous quiet hung over those cliffs as the lighters conveying the landing parties approached the shore. The guns of the ships hurled their shells uselessly against iron rocks. Then the bombardment ceased. For a breathless minute there was an unearthly hush broken at last by the noise of keels grounding in the shingle.

As though it were a signal, inferno broke loose. Within a few seconds, dead and dying lay in heaps or sank under the water.



The sea-edge foam ran red across the sand. Every gun and rifle that was fired took toll. The crowds of helpless men, struggling through wire and water, were perfect targets; marksmanship was superfluous.

Nothing it seemed, could face that storm of iron: yet the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers and the men of the Royal Naval Division who comprised this forlorn hope, still struggled on, dripping wet, lacerated by barbs of wire, torn, wounded, battered. With numbers dreadfully thinned they reached the open beach. Even then the marvellous discipline of these indomitable troops never faltered.

As though they were on parade they actually reformed their broken line, dressing their ranks in such a hail of shot and shell as no soldiers had ever faced before. It was a crazy, noble sight: but it could avail nothing. Advance was out of the question: the attack was halted in bloody arrest.

All seemed over: it remained only for those stubborn heroes to stand till they were shot down. But a fortunate accident dramatically turned the tide of battle.

While the leading boats had made straight for the centre of the beach, those on the left had turned away from the machine-gun fire towards the shelter of the rocks below Cape Tekke. It was the one spot not covered by fire from the cliffs and the men had been able to land with little loss.

Inspired to frenzy by the sight of the fearful carnage below them, they had torn their way up to the top of the cliffs. Turks were before them, unsuspecting, crouching over machine-guns and rifles, by now almost too hot to hold. As though mad these men of the Lancashire Regiment dashed forward, bayoneting the gunners and all whom they met in the Turkish trenches.

The merciless fire slackened. On the beaches, carnage halted and the survivors, still disciplined, moved forward with precision to the shelter of the overhanging cliffs.

On the right flank a similar landing had met with almost equal success and within three hours, the two wings of that amphitheatre of death were in British hands.

Reinforced by a battalion of the 4th Worcesters who were landed at 9 o'clock, the troops battled forwards, working their way up the ravines towards the central crests. Slowly they won on and at last the whole line of hills was cleared of the enemy. The beach was safe: stores, ammunitions and guns were unloaded—across the torn bodies of a thousand English dead.

Terrible as were the scenes enacted at Beach W, they were outfaced in horror by those enacted at Beach V.

Round the promontory of Sedd-el-Bahr, the currents of the Dardanelles sweep angrily into the Aegean Sea. The depth of water near the shore at Beach V is consequently much greater, for the sand is cut away steeply below water-level. Sir Ian Hamilton had decided to take advantage of this fact. Instead of trying to land all his troops from open boats which necessarily could give no protection to their occupants in their slow approach to the shore, he had prepared specially an old four thousand ton steamer, the *River Clyde*.

This vessel, whose name is ever memorable, was fitted up with a steel-protected bridge. Into her bows were built a number of casements sheltering guns of various calibres. Her sides were cut away and in their place were fixed enormous steel doors which could be swung back in a minute. From these could issue the armed host that lay patiently in her hold. She resembled that famous Wooden Horse which, centuries before, Greek warriors had dragged up to the walls of ancient Troy, only a few miles away across the water.

The swift current made any landing difficult but it was hoped to beach the *River Clyde* and to fill the intervening gap by a sort of bridge-up of a string of lighters and steam hoppers which accompanied her.

From shelter of her bulk it was believed that rowing boats could dash across the short space to the beach with comparatively little loss. Altogether there was a certain optimism about the success of this landing on which indeed, the British command placed its chief hopes, for everything possible had been done to ensure its success. But Beach V was if anything, even more of a death-trap than Beach W. Smaller and with more rugged cliffs above it, it was completely dominated by the guns which the Turks had concealed behind the ruined walls of the village and old fort at Sedd-el-Bahr. Here again, no effort had been spared to render the position impregnable. Wire, guns and trenches all contributed their deadly menace to any invaders. So confident was the Turkish commander of the strength of this position that barely five hundred Turks had been assigned to its defence. His confidence proved well-founded.

While the fifteen-inch guns of the *Queen Elizabeth*, twenty thousand yards out at sea hurled salvoes of shells each weighing half a ton on to the distant cliffs, the *River Clyde* steamed

shorewards, leading her swarm of small craft for all the world like a duck shepherding her brood across a mill pond.

Once again as at Beach W, the Turks held their fire until the moment of landing. Misfortune struck the venture at the outset. The old steamer was steered for the beach under Sedd-el-Bahr, where her commander designed to run her nose into the sand, but as she strove forward she was caught by the current and swung eastward close to a reef of rocks where she stuck fast. Deep water surrounded her on all sides and the lighters which strove to bridge the gap, swung crazily in the swirl of the racing water.

Before the bridge was nearly complete, however, her iron doors swung back. Out of her hold began to pour the leading units of more than two thousand men, comprised of the 1st Dublin Fusiliers, the 1st Munster Fusiliers and the 2nd Hampshires besides a number of men from the Royal Naval Division.

As the first company rushed forward, the Turks opened fire. It was annihilating. Scarcely a man survived and the head of the column withered away as it emerged. In the shambles the sailors strove desperately to hold the lighters in position, to save the wounded and to rescue the drowning. Not since the days when British troops had stormed into the blood-soaked beach of Badajoz had such frightful scenes been witnessed.

The dead and wounded lay in heaps in the water, on the sand and all over the lighters. Still the troops rushed undaunted from the hold. In their desperate resolve to reach the land they heeded neither the fate of their comrades nor their own mortal peril.

Soon a gangway of bodies spread from ship to shore and across it a handful of men, more lucky than their fellows, splashed and slithered to the beach and began to tear their way through the terrible wire. The boats had fared little better: their rowers, many of whom were killed, were unable to breast the strong currents and the boats swung idly, presenting perfect targets to the Turkish marksmen. Even when they did edge nearer they were held up on submerged cables and their occupants, who with crazy courage leapt into the sea, were caught and lacerated on under-water wire.

It was a miracle that any troops reached the shore at all. But some did; and despite the awful slaughter their comrades continued to pour out of the sides of the steamer.

Brigadier-General Napier, in command of the operations, had gallantly led one of these mad rushes. He was shot down and most of those with him. The desperate attempt had failed: human courage could do no more, and had it been continued would have

resulted only in the complete destruction of the whole landing force. The order was given to cease further operations until nightfall.

Even then, the men still left behind in the steamer continued to surge forward and only by desperate efforts were their officers able to restrain them.

Their comrades who had reached the beach were isolated. Once again, however, fate relented and the seemingly inevitable massacre was averted. A few yards from the waters edge the tides and currents had thrown up a low sand-bank some five feet high. Under the shelter of this, the handful of troops crouched all day, scarcely daring to move, waiting, waiting, waiting. In the hold of the *River Clyde*, with no knowledge of what was happening, the rest of the brigade endured with patience and fortitude the remaining hours of daylight.

A perfect tornado of bullets and shrapnel rattled on the steel sides of the steamer, for the guns in her forward casements and the distant fire of the battleships was quite unable to quell the enemy batteries.

All day long the dreadful suspense continued; then just as darkness began to fall, the Turkish fire on the ship and shore slackened. It was directed westward.

What had happened? The men of the Lancashire Regiment had landed, it will be recalled, some mile or so to the right on Beach W. Despite the appalling losses they had sustained and the intensive fighting they had been called upon to face, they had never called a halt. All day they had battled steadily forward and towards the evening of that memorable Sunday they had reached the heights on which stood Sedd-el-Bahr overlooking Beach V.

Steadily working their way eastward they began to drive the Turkish machine-gunners and riflemen out of their trenches and as a result the trapped men below them on beach and steamer were given a respite. They seized their chance immediately and, aided by the growing darkness, the remaining troops in the *River Clyde* were speedily got ashore.

With scarcely a pause they pushed forward on their left to aid in the attack on Sedd-el-Bahr and by midnight they had effected lodgments in the lower hills whence they were able to make contact with the Lancashire Fusiliers from Beach W.

Even then the position was desperately critical. Their line in the centre of the beach was still terribly exposed and their new position was under direct fire from the village on higher ground and the isolated hill behind it.

The remnants of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers and of the Hampshire Regiment had been under fire all day and most of them had been in continuous action for sixteen hours. Many had been without water or food for a long period and all were exhausted by their dreadful labours and the nerve-racking strain of the operations. Yet when, just before dawn, orders were received for an attack on the village of Sedd-le-Bahr, they never hesitated.

Away out to sea the battleship *Albion* turned its guns on the Turkish position and began an intensive bombardment. As it ceased the weary troops dashed forward and in another three hours of desperate hand-to-hand fighting stormed their way into the ruined citadel. By nine o'clock they were masters of the village, but fought to a finish.

Beyond them lay another hill on the crest of which a Turkish redoubt held strong forces of the enemy. While that hill-crest was in Turkish hands, Beach V was insecure. Unless it was speedily captured, enemy reinforcements, which during all this time were steadily arriving, might make it impregnable. Another order was issued. The redoubt was to be taken at all costs.

To prepare the way, the *Albion* once again began a bombardment of the enemy position, but in face of this new obstacle the troops wavered. They had now been battling for over twenty-four hours without cease; their bravest officers were killed, their ranks were terribly depleted. Units had become inextricably mixed, cohesion and order had gone. Even their wonderful discipline was in danger. Let us remember that even if these men had refused to move they would still have ranked as heroes.

Into the midst of these utterly weary, dispirited and disorganized troops there walked at this critical moment, a very brave man, Colonel Doughty-Wylie. He was one of the staff officers in charge of the operations on the beach. All day and all night he had laboured directing the men and inspiring them with his example.

Now at this evil hour, he appeared in the front line. While the bombardment from the *Albion* continued, he rallied the tired troops, giving them confidence and new courage but above all, leadership. And the moment the rain of shells from the battleship ceased, he walked forward, armed only with a cane, into the tempest of fire which the Turks on the hilltop directed upon him. For a moment or two he bore a charmed life and the troops behind him leapt forward with a cheer.

Suddenly he faltered and fell, shot dead within a few yards of the Turkish line. But like Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham, he

died in the moment of victory, for inspired to sublime madness by his action, burning to avenge his heroic death the troops he had rallied dashed forward in a wild charge that proved irresistible. Cutting through the barbed wire, forgetful of their exhaustion and oblivious of their frightful losses, they stormed into the Turkish trenches and bayoneted their defenders.

The heights were won : it was only fitting that the troops should give the name of Doughty-Wylie to this hill on which lies buried a very gallant officer.

But his individual heroism, for all that it stands out in bold and dramatic relief, cannot eclipse the achievements of those three regiments, the Dublin and the Munster Fusiliers and the Hampshires. Speaking of their deeds of this fearful day, Mr. Winston Churchill in his book "The World Crisis," has paid them noble but fitting tribute. "The prolonged, renewed, and seemingly inexhaustible efforts of the survivors of these three battalions, their persistency, their will power, their physical endurance, achieved a feat of arms certainly in these respects not often, if ever surpassed in the history of either island race."

We cannot here even sketch in the closing chapters of the Gallipoli landing. They belong to history, with their moving tales of heroism, endurance and disaster. They tell a story of a steadily expanding battlefield, of steadily increasing obstacles, of final tragedy and failure, a story of relentless, all-devouring war.

Here we have set down only an epic of adventure, shot through and through with supreme courage. When first the full tale of the Battle of the Beaches was told it stilled a world with awe. When it is retold a hundred years hence, men will still marvel at the deeds of valour done in those two fateful days.

# IN SEARCH OF KING SOLOMON'S MINES

By  
W. J. MAKIN

"TOMORROW," said the lone prospector. "We will go to King Solomon's mines."

He drained his glass, gave me a casual nod, and went off to bed. I was left sitting on the veranda of an hotel in the heart of Rhodesia, gazing at the starry sky of the south.

King Solomon's mines! Did they really exist? When I had first pondered the problem, had scanned maps and talked with lonely adventurers in the gloom of my rooms in Clifford's Inn, this wonderful gold mine of the Old Testament seemed a fantasy of the imagination.

But here, in the awful loneliness and quietude of a Rhodesian night, everything seemed possible. The lone prospector had promised to take me to King Solomon's mines in as casual a fashion as a taxi-driver agrees to drive to a nearby address.

We set out early the next morning from Fort Victoria. After riding for twelve miles we came to one of the long, low kopjes, nature's mathematical joke in Africa.

"That's the reef where Solomon's slaves mined the gold," said the prospector, stabbing a finger in the direction of the kopje. "And behind the reef are the mystery ruins, the temple with its secret passages and the vaults where the gold was stacked."

The prospector said all this gravely, unemotionally, and with the assurance of a man who is going to show you the Albert Memorial. And, curiously enough, the country through which we were riding had a momentary resemblance to Kensington Gardens.

The riotous jungle of the imagination had given place to open grasslands and a few squat trees. An occasional boulder dotted the landscape. For the rest, if I had suddenly come across a refreshment kiosk or a notice: "Please keep off the grass," I should not have been startled. But Africa is like that—except in the story books.

We first climbed the kopje to see those pits where the gold was mined. Caves and holes riddle the reef. The ancient miners

who plundered the earth for the treasures of Solomon had no modern cyanide for extracting gold. The boulders were smashed by hurling them into depths and the gold torn forth by some ancient crushing apparatus.

As we stumbled among the boulder-strewn slopes, lizards wriggled across the rocks in the sunshine. In one of the caves a huge, black snake coiled in sinister fashion. The prospector did not hesitate. Putting his rifle to his shoulder, he fired three shots in rapid succession into that coiled blackness. The echoes reverberated in the maze of holes and tunnels.

More than £150,000,000 worth of gold was extracted from this reef. Such is the considered opinion of mining experts. Actually gold still exists there, although only in small quantities. Certainly the ancients extracted all the gold worth while from this sun-baked reef in the heart of Africa.

Even in these days of intense gold productions, £150,000,000 worth of gold means the work of years, and of thousands of men. These old workings over which I tramped were only one of a chain that grouped themselves around the mystery ruins. And subterranean stone passages led from the mines to the ruins which I could see dimly in the valley beneath.

"They're called the Zimbabwe ruins," said the prospector, "but that is merely the native word for gold-workings. Let's go by this passage into the temple."

We began our tramp of more than a mile between stone walls. This one-time subterranean passage stretched between the gold mines and the vaults. One could visualize the black slaves sweating and stumbling in the darkness, the precious metal on their bruised backs and the sneering task-master behind them.

They plunged along the stone passage-way, as the two sun-burned prospectors did on this occasion. The stone walls more than thirty feet high hemmed them in on both sides. Probably it was not permitted to these miserable slaves to see the blue silk of the sky stretched above them as we saw it—for in those days dark deeds were done in darkness, and the passage was roofed from the sun.

We soon saw the reason for these massive stone walls. Actually the whole of the goldfields and the sacred temple were surrounded by fortress-like walls, forty feet high and ten feet thick. This mighty barrier of grey stone stretched among the tree trunks glowing with orchids, fought the pink blossomed creeper that stretched its tentacles everywhere, and defied the mimosa, acacia, and wisteria to flaunt their beauty above its heights.



But it was not the African jungle that these gold-miners of old feared. They were scared of the black barbarians, the naked Africans with blow-pipe and spear who lurked in the shadows of that pleasant landscape. The Africans had little need of gold. But they hated these adventurers from afar, who raided the kraals, enslaved the natives, and hurried away to the fastnesses of those stone walls.

What became of this mountain of gold? Was the whole of that £150,000,000 transported to the Red Sea and the palaces of Solomon? There are archæologists who, with the Bible in one hand and a map of Africa in the other, insist that "the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold" was Rhodesia, that Tarshish was Sofala, the port from which "once in three years came the navy of Tarshish bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks" to Ophir.

But much more fantastic is the story that a man hugged to himself as he lay dying in St. John's Wood in 1908. His name was Francis Ryskes-Chandler, and his health had been ruined at the age of forty-five by constant bouts of fever. But before he died he confided to a bank official who was about to go to Africa the story of a mysterious city hidden in the forest near the Zimbabwe, where blocks of gold lie among the ruins and the graves of the old chiefs.

Ryskes-Chandler whispered as he lay dying that he had heard of treasure-laden ruins when he was in Beira. It so impressed him that he quickly formed an expedition and set off for the forest. The route lay along the old trail that the gold-miners of Zimbabwe had used for their caravans of gold going seawards to Sofala.

Ryskes-Chandler talked with witch-doctors, near the forest. One of them told him that in the heart of the forest was a city of the chiefs, their tombs, and the gold that was buried with them. But woe to the white man who dared enter, for the spirit of the forest guarded the secret city.

The white man laughed, and set out hopefully. But the next day all his native porters deserted him. Nevertheless, alone, he ventured into the vastness of the forest. Passing through a sunlit glade, something streaked past him and plunged into a tree trunk. He saw an assegai that had bit deeply into the tree. Drawing a revolver he turned and faced this mysterious enemy. He could see no one.

Boldly he went on. Just before sunset the forest gave way, and he found himself among ruined walls and grey stones. He was

in the midst of altars and towers and great slabs of fallen masonry. His foot kicked against an object. He picked it up and found it was a golden ornament. Then the night swept over all with the swiftness of the tropics.

That terrible night among the ruins of the mystery city must have come back to Ryskes-Chandler as he whispered his story to the bank clerk in St. John's Wood.

He had sat down, huddled against a stone wall, unable to sleep. In the middle of the night, the intense quiet was suddenly broken by a peal of hideous laughter. It died away, then burst forth again, louder, and, as it seemed, close at hand.

Ryskes-Chandler whipped round, revolver in hand. For a time he could see nothing in that horrible darkness. Then, as though illuminated by some unearthly light, he saw an immensely tall figure with a grotesque face, so distorted as to resemble a mask. He fired. There was a prolonged yell, and the tall figure swayed. But the next moment the white man received a stunning blow on the back of the head and fell unconscious.

It was morning when he recovered. He could see the city, a vast labyrinth overgrown with trees and thorn. His only desire was to escape, quickly. Bruised and ill, he staggered back through the forest, and reached a native village, the one where the witch-doctor had warned him against the mystery ruins.

"Where is the witch-doctor?" he gasped.

"He went away into the forest and has not yet returned," was the reply.

And Ryskes-Chandler smiled, for he recalled something familiar in that tall figure at which he had fired.

Such was the story told by the dying man to a bank clerk. He urged him to seek out the mystery of the city of the forest and discover the gold that was hidden there. The bank clerk sailed for South Africa, but died shortly afterwards in Capetown before he had a chance of testing the truth of the story.

I spent many days digging and sweating beneath the sun of Rhodesia amidst the ruins of Zimbabwe. Such gold as I obtained was insufficient to pay my hotel bill. But there is still gold in plenty among those scrubby hills, although only giant machinery and hordes of native workers could hope to extract it. If this indeed had been King Solomon's mines, the wise monarch of the Old Testament had lived luxuriously enough to extract most of the gold worth while. But I, too, held the theory that the mines are elsewhere and still fabulously rich.

My persistent search for King Solomon's mines brought many old prospectors to my camp, each one with vague tales of expeditions, and strange mysteries that had been unfolded to their eyes. There was the story of one traveller who knew of the existence of stone ruins similar to those of Zimbabwe, which were situated on the Portuguese African border beyond Rhodesia.

He had talked with natives in the Sabi Valley. They said there were two ruined cities built of white stone, standing on adjacent hills, and that the cities were inhabited by two gods, one a headless zebra.

The natives said that the ruins were not as high as Zimbabwe, but were greater in circumference. To reach them one had to make a three days' journey without water, and guides were impossible to obtain. An English commissioner tried to reach the ruins, but his guides deserted him and he had to return.

Sitting in my camp in Africa, I soon realized that I was engaged upon a hopeless but most adventurous quest. For three centuries men had been searching for the mine which, in Solomon's day was reputed to be so fabulously rich in gold, that silver became of no account at his court.

Slave-raiding Arabs tortured countless natives in the hope of extracting information about the mine. Adventurous Portuguese covered hundreds of miles in vain attempts to locate it. For the most part the early treasure hunters never returned to civilization. They were either wiped out by the natives or else fell victims to disease.

I had decided from my old maps and the many legendary stories that I had collected, that the lost mines of King Solomon lay somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Zambesi River in Southern Africa. I could even say that my search had narrowed down to an area of about two hundred and fifty thousand square miles. But to pioneer such an area would take me a lifetime and cost a fortune. I spent some time flying over these deep forests and boulder-strewn plains, photographing likely areas and then studying the prints made from the negatives. At last, I had to admit that all my work had been fruitless.

I travelled northwards. It was while I was in Uganda that there came to me a report from the distinguished explorer and archæologist, Count Byron de Prorok. This adventurous Pole claimed that he had discovered the original King Solomon's mines at Werka Warka, in the unknown mountains of western Abyssinia. Werka Warka, in Abyssinian, means, "The Valley of Gold."

Count de Prorok found the mines which furnished gold for the tombs of the kings of Egypt thousands of years before Christ, and were still being worked for local native rulers. It was only with the greatest difficulty, and after the personal intervention of Lord Tyrrell, former British ambassador in Paris, that he obtained permission from the emperor of Abyssinia to visit Werka Warka.

Even then he and his party had to travel at night and by secret passes to avoid capture. Near the spot he came on hundreds of slaves seeking gold. Nearby were stone pyramids, said to be the tombs of slaves of the time of the Egyptian kings. The count defied a ban to enter one of them. He noticed a peculiar chemical smell, characteristic of ancient embalming, which convinced him that here, several weeks' journey from Egypt, had been an Egyptian settlement of Solomon's time.

Reading the report of Count de Prorok's expedition recalled an adventure of my own when in Abyssinia, in the days before the Italians conquered the country and sent the emperor into exile. I sat in a dismal, ant-ridden hotel in Addis Ababa, and facing me was a semi-drunken prospector from Johannesburg. An empty champagne bottle stood on the table between us.

"I tell you there's miles of the stuff—miles of gold," he shouted, waving a grumpy, sunburnt hand. "Also caves, where diamonds lie about for the picking. They're the lost mines of King Solomon, and I've found 'em."

"Where are they?" I asked bluntly.

He closed one eye cunningly.

"Away in the mountains—out in the blue."

"And why don't you go and grab the stuff?"

His fist thumped the table, knocking over the bottle.

"Because I can't get a concession to mine granted to me by this black man who has been crowned emperor of Abyssinia. I've been in the God-forsaken town ten weeks, bribing and wheedling a chance for my concession to be signed. But Ras Tafari's too clever. He's not going to sign yet. But let's have another bottle. We're celebrating like the rest, aren't we?"

I crooked my finger to the native waiter.

Another bottle of champagne was brought.

"Would you like to join a syndicate that's going out to find those mines?" bleared the gold prospector at me.

I shook my head.

"Sorry, but I'm here for a coronation, not a gold-prospecting expedition."

"You're throwing away a fortune."

I shrugged my shoulders and left it at that.

I met many prospectors and *concessionnaires* in Addis Ababa with their well-thumbed maps and thirsty throats ready to tell a tale of boundless wealth. Of the existence of gold in Abyssinia there are many rumours. But the facts of gold digging are somewhat discouraging. Geologists argue that as there is alluvial gold in the rivers, somewhere among the hills must be a rich reef. A few small reefs have been discovered and quickly worked out. The ancient Egyptians knew of these mines, and exploited them to the full. Even today the natives of Didessa wash gold from the sand of the river, but only in sufficient quantities to make it a paying business for natives. Then there are two gold mines in Abyssinia, exploited by Europeans which were recently caused to be closed down because of the war. Both mines were owned by the emperor.

And here, for the moment, my search for King Solomon's mines ends. Whether those galleries of gold exist in North Africa or in South Africa, whether they are to be identified as the part of Southern Arabia which is still called Ophir, is still a matter for conjecture and the travels of experts. I do feel certain, however, that the real mines of King Solomon, lost for many centuries, are still undiscovered. It is an adventure worthy of any young man in quest of golden fleece. I have tried and failed. But although I returned to London without the fabled gold in my pockets, I came back rich in experience and many adventures. The quest had been worth while.

# MURDER AMONG INDIANS

By

PHILIP H. GODSELL

**F**EAR and starvation stalked amongst the wigwams of the Saulteaux on the lonely shores of Sandy Lake.

Upon a spruce bed in one of the birch-bark lodges lay the young squaw Sap-was-te, raving in delirium; possessed, said Pe-ce-quan, the medicine man, by evil spirits; liable at any moment to turn *Weendigo*, or cannibal, and endanger all the band.

Few young squaws in the band had been so well liked as Sap-was-te, whose comely looks, flashing white teeth and ready smile had endeared her to young and old. Eagerly she had been sought after by the young bucks, upon all of whom she smiled; yet, not until the previous spring had she given herself to the son of old Pe-ce-quan, the conjurer.

Early in the autumn, just as the leaves were falling from the trees and the tang of approaching winter could be felt in the evening breeze, the Red Sucker band of Saulteaux had left the company's trading post at Island Lake, nearly two hundred miles to the eastward of Norway House, and slowly paddled their bark canoes to their winter hunting grounds at Sandy Lake.

There they had erected their lodges amongst the deep spruce woods which fringed the shore. Sap-was-te had been singularly quiet for one who was usually so merry, and the music of her laughter had ceased to enliven the evenings around the campfires. The young squaw was taken ill soon after.

At first they had thought that she would soon recover. Now, however, she was delirious and strange talk and queer words came tumbling from her lips. At times again she fought with peculiar strength and ferocity, causing Pe-ce-quan, the seventy-year-old medicine man, to shake his head and ponder deeply, with eyes fixed upon the glowing embers in the centre of the lodge. For days he had howled and shouted, waved his medicine rattle and pounded his tomtom close to the girl's body, in hopes that the noise would drive the evil spirits out, but all to no avail.

Pe-ce-quan, like all the Indians of this almost unknown land, was steeped in the superstitions of the red men. Still a pagan, he worshipped his *powargan*, or medicine bag, the spirits in the

woods and waterfalls around him, and appeased the evil manitous with offerings of tobacco and coloured cloth, obtained by bartering furs with the company's traders.

It was obvious that Sap-was-te, had in some way, offended the spirits and that unless something was done to propitiate them without delay the girl would surely become a "Weendigo," or cannibal, and devour whoever crossed her path. The spirits must be appeased, and that quickly, to enable the terror-stricken hunters to venture into the woods in search of moose and game. For instead of hunting a living they had simply crouched over their lodge fires, frightened and afraid to leave the camp, although starvation stared them in the face and merciless winter was fast approaching.

After consulting the chief, Mista-innnew, old Pe-ce-quan called a council of the headmen of the village, and it was decided to invoke the aid of the spirits, so retiring to a glade deep in the primeval forest, the old medicine man commenced to build his *chi-si-kan* or conjuring lodge.

For the rest of the day he remained alone and aloof from all, engaged in the awesome rites connected with the medicine lodge, for Pe-ce-quan was a member of that mysterious and powerful Mi-di-wi-win society, which, at one time, exercised tremendous influence throughout the Ojibway tribe, of which the Saulteaux were a branch.

When dawn broke above the swaying tree-tops Pe-ce-quan and the chief took over the lodge occupied by the sick girl and the occupants were forced to scatter. Some time later small holes appeared on either side of the bark covering, through which a stout cord dangled, swaying in the wind.

Entering wigwam after wigwam the old chief finally selected two young Indians, known to the traders as Angus Rae and Norman Fiddler, from the fear-stricken occupants. Protest, they knew, was useless; they must do as they were bid or risk the sure vengeance of the powerful conjurer.

Their orders were short and simple. Each was to take his place on opposite sides of Sap-was-te's lodge, hold the dangling cord, and, when the drum beat, to pull with all his might.

Soon the drum throbbed out its warning, the executioners pulled upon the rope, then, as the dreaded tomtom ceased to beat, the young hunters dropped the line as though it was a thing accursed and, pale with fright, they rushed to their lodges.

From behind the bole of a distant tree Sap-was-te's husband

had watched the dreaded preparations, but lacked the courage to raise a hand in his wife's defence, so deep-seated were the pagan superstitions of the tribe.

Not long afterwards a bundle swathed in a rabbit-skin robe was carried into the leafless forest and buried in a shallow grave. Then, lest the evil spirits should return and raise the body back to life, a long sharp stake was driven through it into the ground and a pile of rocks was heaped above the spot, while the uncanny howls of the starving sleigh dogs served as a requiem for the dead girl's soul. Then many shots were fired into the air from the guns of the motley group of hunters to frighten the hovering spirits away; a torch was applied to the execution lodge, and Pe-ce-quan informed his awed followers that all would now be well.

Some months later "Big Bill" Campbell, the Hudson's Bay Company's trader at Island Lake, was looking disgustingly from the small window of his log dwelling at the snow swirling around outside. Never before had he seen such a severe winter. Right from freeze-up it had been desperately cold and snow had fallen every time there had been the slightest rise in temperature. Drifted snow almost covered the stockade and buildings, and though it was nearing Christmas, hardly an Indian had been in with furs to trade.

Like most of the company's men, Campbell had entered the service in Scotland when a lad of sixteen, sailed on the annual ship and landed at York Factory. Since that time he had travelled widely amongst the Indians, knew both Crees and Ojibways intimately, their superstitions and languages and, like other traders, managed to preserve a loose control over the thousand or so pagan natives who traded at his post.

Turning to his native wife, he addressed her in Cree.

"*Wat-chis-to-gatz!* This is the worst winter I have ever seen. Snow, snow every day. Why, if this keeps up, the Indians won't be able to trap any furs at all; their traps will be snowed up. Here it is December already, hardly a pelt in the store, and McTavish due any day now."

A knock sounded at the door.

"*Petigay*" (come in), shouted the trader.

Hat in hand the interpreter entered. "Three dog teams out on the ice, sir, and coming this way," he remarked. "Dogs seem tired and they're travelling very slow."

Slipping on his fur cap, fringed buckskin coat and gauntlets,



Campbell stepped outside into the swirling snow and looked in the direction of the interpreter's outstretched hand. Between the snow flurries he could detect three long, black, snake-like forms writhing and twisting over the frozen surface of the lake two miles away.

"Hm! Guess those are some of the Sandy Lakers at last; they'll be all in, bucking those drifts. Better thaw out some fish for their dogs, and get your wife to cook up a few bannocks and make a kettle of tea."

About an hour later Campbell looked down disgustedly into the faces of five emaciated Indian hunters squatted cross-legged upon the floor of the trading store.

"*Wat-chis-to-gatz!*" he exclaimed. "What's happened to the hunters of Sandy Lake when this is all the fur they can bring in after howling for big debts last fall?"

Pointing to a pile of silver, red, and cross foxes, and a considerable number of mink, marten and beaver skins piled upon the counter he continued: "Although you say you are starving, how can you expect me to give you more goods in debt if you cannot bring in more fur than this and pay for what you got already? Last winter you brought in four times as many skins."

"*Wha! Wha! Okemow,*" answered Norman Fiddler, "it is not our fault that we have had bad luck all winter. Ever since Pe-ce-quan made us kill that girl Sap-was-te the evil spirits have followed us everywhere. We cannot even catch fish in our nets; Kinaw-gabow, our best moose hunter, shot himself, and day after day the snow covers up our traps so that we cannot catch any animals at all. If you do not help us soon we shall all starve to death. We had to singe and eat our beaver skins on our way in here, and the people at Big Camp are starving."

Until far into the night the trader sat in his big babiche-netted chair, smoking pipe after pipe of Imperial Mixture, lost in serious meditation.

When was all this going to end? These pagan Saulteaux were becoming possessed with a blood lust. Hardly a winter now went by without word being received of some murder or primitive execution.

Only the fall before they had burned an old woman to death at Satchigo Lake because they said she was too old, or too evil to live, and that it was the evil spirits which would not let her die. He had seen the poor old soul the summer before lying

neglected, like a dog, outside one of the bark wigwams, shrivelled up to nothing, and fed on scraps thrown to her as if she were a dog, yet with bright intelligent eyes. She was very old, probably one hundred and ten years or more, and was undoubtedly an encumbrance to the band. But he had been shocked when her own daughter had told him of the manner of her execution. She had been cast alive upon a flaming pyre of dry spruce logs. After the fire had burned down all that had remained was the old woman's heart amongst the ashes, which, according to the daughter, was a sure sign of the evil that was in it, else it would have been consumed within the flames. She had, therefore, taken the heart, impaled it on a stick, and ponasked it as one would roast a duck.

Later in the winter Robert Fiddler had come in and reported that old Pe-ce-quan had had his cousin shot through the head because he was ill. Then they had burned to death Me-o-was-cum because he had suffered for days with an intestinal complaint, attributed to bad spirits.

These constant killings were affecting the mentality and entire outlook of the whole band; soon it would be impossible to get them to hunt at all. After all, fur was, and always would be, the thought uppermost in any trader's mind, and anything that interfered with the trapping of furs was a matter of primary importance. Should he notify the North West Mounted Police at Norway House? The problem was a difficult one. If he failed to do so then he was, to all intents and purposes, protecting the culprits. On the other hand, McTavish would, as usual, resent any action by the police as interfering with his own fancied authority, while, if he did report to Sergeant Smith and the Indians found out, as they most assuredly would, it might seriously imperil his standing with them, and they would quite likely scatter and trade at other posts, or even with the hated "free traders."

Nevertheless, he decided to give the list to Sergeant Smith, and get him to write to headquarters.

Two months after Sergeant Smith had written the commissioner of the North West Mounted Police at Ottawa regarding the killing of the girl Sap-was-te, at Island Lake, he received his answer.

In the meantime he had sent a lone patrol off to Island Lake to gather evidence regarding the killings he had heard of from Bill Campbell and others. One morning Constable O'Neill had left the barracks in the chilling cold of subarctic dawn, and

with but a single dog team had followed his Cree guide across the river, where they had disappeared into the black and gloomy forest.

As soon as he had finished reading the commissioner's letter Sergeant Smith called in Constable Cashman.

"Well, constable," he remarked as he looked into the clear blue eyes of the stockily-built young man before him, "I've got a little job for you which may keep you hoofing it for some time to come!

"You remember the story these Hudson's Bay men were telling at Christmas-time about that murder at Sandy Lake last fall? All right! I've just got word from the commissioner. He's decided it's about time to put an end to these murderous practices and make an example of the medicine men. O'Neill is at Island Lake now, getting all the evidence he can. From what I've already learned I'm satisfied the matter is serious. Judging from the news O'Neill sends in, this Pe-ce-quan is a bad actor; *his band have killed about twenty all told*, and the same sort of thing is going on in other parts of the north. The influence of these medicine men must be broken, and it's up to you to do the job! You will leave with Moses Gore and Jimmie Kirkness, who knows the Sandy Lake country well; proceed to Island Lake, arrest the chief and medicine man, obtain the witnesses you want, and bring the whole bunch back to Norway House. These Sauteaux seem to be bad right through and are outlawed by the other tribes! They're all pagans, and most of them have seen no white men but the traders, so you'll have to be darned careful. Remember, there's to be no trouble, and you must *not* return without your prisoners. And," added the sergeant, "if you fail—God help you!"

As with O'Neill, it was long before sunrise when Constable Cashman and his three teams sped down the icy surface of the Nelson River between the high-forested banks. To all appearances the little settlement, sprawled along the shores, was fast asleep, but many pairs of black, beady eyes watched the little patrol as it started on its difficult and dangerous journey.

Two white men, mere youths, were to penetrate into an almost unknown wilderness, arrest a powerful medicine man who knew no laws but those of his own making and held the power of life and death over his followers, and also the chief of a band of outlaw Indians, feared by all adjacent tribes! And to accomplish this they carried not weapons, but merely the prestige of the North

West Mounted Police, and their reputation for square dealing. Would it be enough? Many of the old-timers who knew those Indians said that it would not!

Months passed but no word reached Norway House. At length the ice commenced to get black in spots, then, almost without warning, summer burst upon the Northland; the trickle of water was heard everywhere, the snow disappeared almost overnight, and with a terrific booming the ice of the Nelson River gave way. Freed of its fetters the swift and turbid waters rushed and swirled by on their way to Hudson Bay.

When the middle of July arrived without any sign of the police, anxiety spread apace at Norway House, and in many quarters conviction was openly voiced that the Saulteaux had lived up to their evil reputation and the patrol had been destroyed.

As soon as they had left the hard beaten trails near the fort. Constable Cashman and his companions realized that they had no soft job ahead of them. Day after day they toiled through enormous snowdrifts, often whipped by the biting north wind; fighting blizzards accompanied by stinging, blinding snow; glad when night came to stretch their tired and pained limbs upon soft and fragrant spruce boughs before the roaring camp-fire. A hot meal of bannock, beans, and steaming strong tea would revive their spirits, and after feeding their dogs they would roll in their rabbit-skins and sink into merciful forgetfulness of aching and swollen feet, frozen ears and the stab of icy blasts.

It was many days ere the picketed enclosure of the log fort at Island Lake came into view. Long before the tired dogs dashed excitedly through the gateway the red flag fluttered out in greeting—a welcome sight to any northern traveller.

The genial Campbell, accompanied by O'Neill, met them at the gateway with hearty handshakes, glad to see another white face in this land of loneliness.

"Come right in, boys! Never mind your dogs—John, my trapper, will look after them and put your stuff into the warehouse. Just come right in and get warmed up, and give us the latest news from Norway House and Winnipeg!"

The two days' rest that followed, the extra feed for the tired dogs, the sumptuous meals of moose-meat, dried berries and real bread, and the chance to get warmed through and through, put the party in fine fettle when the time came to hit the trail once more. With parting words of cheer from the big trader, and many warnings to be careful of the Red Sucker Indians ringing in their

cars, the Mounties now headed towards the hunting grounds of the dreaded Sauteaux.

Once again they faced their bitter battle with nature and the snowdrifts, and it was not until the fifth day after leaving Island Lake that they sighted the bleak expanse of island-dotted ice that Jimmie Kirkness said was Sandy Lake. Although they searched the shores for signs of an Indian camp, not a wisp of smoke was anywhere to be seen, so desolate and devoid of life did the surrounding country appear.

Suddenly the native trail-breaker stopped in his tracks, dropped on his knee and examined the surface of the snow minutely: "Injun' walk here mebbe tree, four nights ago," he announced as the sleighs came up. Closely Jim Kirkness and Moses Gore scrutinized the barely discernible concave marks of snowshoes upon the snow.

"He's right," commented Kirkness, "let's follow the direction of this trail towards the shore."

Swinging along on his snowshoes the guide obeyed Jim's orders as the dogs fell into line behind him. When they reached the shore another council of war took place. It was arranged that they would camp for the night sufficiently far in the woods to prevent their camp-fire from being seen by prying eyes out on the lake, while Jim and Moses scouted the shore for a few miles in each direction.

Late that night Jim returned, reporting no luck whatsoever but later on Moses stepped into camp obviously excited, kicked a log, making the fire send up a shower of sparks, then threw on an extra log. All sat up expectantly.

"Well, boys, the birds have flown!" stated Moses laconically. "I found the old camp all right, then about two miles farther on I came across another one which they must have moved to after they killed that girl. I guess they got wise we were coming and beat it, bag and baggage, just before that last snow. They sure left in a hell of a hurry, as I found a partly finished pair of snow shoe frames and quite a lot of other junk around!"

"Moccasin telegram again," muttered Constable Cashman disgustedly. "It sure beats me how news travels in this north country. Not a soul has been ahead of us, we've travelled fast, yet they've found out we're coming and are all prepared for us."

"Cyam" (Never mind), answered Kirkness. "If Moses has located their old camp we can find where they buried the girl. The Indians can't be very far away, as they've got their squaws

and kids with 'em. There's bound to be some kind of a trail we can follow, though it's liable to be slow work. Looks to me as though they're high-tailing it for Deer Lake."

The patrol reached the old camp-site next morning, where they had little difficulty in locating the resting-place of the murdered girl. Turning to the southward they slowly followed the faintly marked trail.

It was not until they arrived at Deer Lake that the trail freshened. Then, as the sun was almost setting, they came upon net-holes surrounded with spruce boughs, a sure sign of the proximity of Indians. As they rounded a heavily-wooded point the outlaw Saulteaux camp lay stretched before them; a score or more of squat bark wigwams nestling in the sombre darkening forest a mile or so ahead.

Rapid movements among the lodges, and the angry barking of many dogs, apprised them that their presence had become known. But they continued resolutely onward with rapidly beating hearts while the medicine drum throbbed its menacing warning across the frozen bay.

Leaving the teams in charge of Moses Gore and the Indian, Constables Cashman and O'Neill, along with Kirkness, climbed the bank and next moment were looking into a sea of angry scowling faces and piercing, deep-set, serpent-like eyes. Squaws, from the security of their lodge doors, spat and hurled insults at the two *Shi-mar-kanis-uk*—the hated Long Knives.

Although he dared not show his feelings, Cashman was surprised at the size of the camp, which was the largest he had seen, while there were far more long-haired, capoted bucks around than he had ever anticipated meeting. Evidently they had heard of the coming of the red coats and a call had been sent by the chief to the neighbouring camps to gather his swarthy supporters all around him.

The Saulteaux were obviously in a thoroughly ugly and surly mood and his interpreter was also nervous. The atmosphere was tense in the extreme and Cashman realized instinctively that any tactless action on his part would probably be accompanied by most serious consequences. Any Indians he had dealt with so far had always held the Mounted Police in fear, and the prestige which this famous force enjoyed went far when making difficult arrests. Here there was no fear, but only bitter racial hatred, and for the first time he fully realized the magnitude of the task before him.

With set lips and a steady stride he entered the largest wigwam

where most of the bucks were assembled, their muzzle-loaders in their hands. Giving a cursory glance at the motley crowd around him, he turned to Kirkness.

"Tell the chief that the great father has sent me a long distance to come and talk with him."

Twenty pairs of beady eyes gazed unwinkingly upon the interpreter as he conveyed the message in the sonorous Ojibway tongue. Piercingly the old chief surveyed the policemen, puffing deliberately meanwhile upon his long-stemmed stone-headed pipe, then with an abrupt wave of his hand towards his followers he arose and faced the Mountie with angry flashing eyes.

"What has your great father to do with the Mi-qua-mapin-uk?" (Red Suckers), demanded the chief arrogantly. "This is the country of the Indians, the An-sin-a-beg, who do as they please in their own hunting grounds. The Long Knives wish to take me and my brother away and put us in their stone house, but I have twenty young men who do not wish that I should go. All of them have guns, all ready to shoot—not toy guns such as you carry in your belts. What is to stop them killing you where you stand and throwing your carcasses, and those of the half-breed dogs you brought with you, to the sleigh dogs?"

It was no idle threat, and Cashman realized it, for the scowling natives seemed only too anxious to put the chief's threat into action at the slightest sign from him. As they grunted their approval he looked the Saulteaux squarely in the eye, then replied in quiet, level tones:

"What you say is only partly true. Mista-innnew, for you forget one thing. Truly, you have twenty young men, but the soldiers of the great father are like the leaves on the trees, and he will never forget an insult offered to the men who wear his red coat. For every one of us you might injure the great father across the big water would send a hundred men to take his place, and he would never rest until he had run each one of you to earth, even as you run the foxes to their holes. Many widows there would be to cut their hair and slash their bodies in mourning for their dead. Let you and your brother Pe-ce-quan show that those grey hairs denote the wisdom age has taught you. Tell those young men to put away their guns, and warn them to do nothing foolish, lest their squaws and children suffer with themselves."

For hours the contest of wills lasted. Frequently the outcome seemed in doubt. Then Mista-innnew suddenly shook the long

locks from before his eyes, threw back his head, with his hands held out towards his captors.

"Mi'way! Ah-mi-way! Put those irons on my wrists. White man. I am old and have not long to live, many winters have left the snows upon my hair. I do not wish to see my people get into trouble. I will go with you, so will my brother Pe-ce-quan. You are a brave man, you look me right in the eye as one true man should always look at another."

Neither of the policemen displayed the intense relief they experienced from the favourable outcome of the council. They knew Indian nature too well not to realize that any moment might still witness a change of attitude. Promptly the two young men who had assisted at the killing were singled out and, upon the advice of Mista-inniew, agreed to accompany the police. Both prisoners were spared the humiliation of being handcuffed, as it might easily have caused the smouldering fires of hatred to once more burst into flame. Without any outward display of haste the baggage of the prisoners was placed upon the sleighs and, accompanied by the chief, Pe-ce-quan and the two witnesses, the four teams set out on their long journey back to Norway House.

Until far into the night they continued on their way, anxious to place as great a distance as possible between themselves and the village they had left, lest, in their excitement, some of the more hot-headed young bucks might follow in their trail and attempt a rescue.

Turn about they stood guard over the sleeping prisoners at night. A large, cold, silvery moon shone down upon the camp as O'Neill took watch, lighting up the heavily-lined face of the sleeping chief. An owl hooted mournfully somewhere in the darkened woods, and a faint breeze sighed through the tree-tops, rustling them slightly. Some unseen presence seemed to hover around the place. The constable watched silently and a feeling of deep sympathy came over him.

After all, these were pagan Indians, and it was their own country which the white man was taking possession of without as much as "by your leave." Murder could not be condoned, yet these natives had their own queer laws and superstitions and, no doubt, there were many occasions when the destruction of a demented person was actually necessary to the safety of the band. Where was one to draw the line? There had been a certain nobility in the manner of the old man's surrender. Furthermore, he remembered now the kindly pat the old chief had given him



on the back when he had insisted to his tribesmen that no harm was to come to the young *Shi-mar-kanis*. After all, the white man's justice, like his commerce and his laws, often worked in strange and unfathomable ways.

Tired, spent and grimy from the smoke of the camp-fires, they at length made their way once more into the fort at Island Lake. Two hundred miles still to go; the trails breaking up under the heat of the warming sun; the surface of lake and river one mass of slush, and the ice unsafe to travel on.

Constable Cashman gave the matter deep thought, then at the earnest solicitation of Bill Campbell he decided not to take foolish chances, but to remain at the post with his prisoners until open water. Then they could travel with the company's fur brigade to Norway House. As soon as this decision was reached the trader turned over one of the post buildings to the police to serve as a temporary jail, and here the prisoners took up their abode. Furnished with ample tea and tobacco, fresh moose-meat and whitefish, the Indians seemed little worried as to what the outcome was to be, but smoked contentedly all day long.

Directly open travelling was possible by water that summer, the three York boats, with police and prisoners aboard, pulled out from the dock at Island Lake to the usual accompaniment of whooping and gun-fire from the Indians lining the shore.

Next day they heard the roaring of water ahead and soon the boats were in the midst of the Kanutchewan Rapids, rushing like mad things through the foaming waters. Passing within ten miles or so of God's Lake, they reached the Mossy Portage and three weeks after leaving Island Lake they sighted Norway House.

With one accord the people at the post rushed down to the dock to greet the new arrivals, and great was the rejoicing when it was found that rumour had once again proved false and that the "lost patrol" was safe.

As the police party transferred to canoes for their two-mile paddle to the barracks at the Crooked Turn, realization of their predicament seemed to strike Pe-ce-quan for the first time. He appeared worried and turned to Campbell, who had accompanied them: "Wha! wha! I guess it is all up with us now."

"*Quiesk, kiam picu weeta*" (Never mind, tell the truth), replied the trader as he shook hands with the prisoners and next moment the paddles dipped and the canoes were on their way.

Ottawa had decided to make an example of the murderers, and to hold the trial at Norway House, in order that the surrounding

tribesmen should be properly impressed with the power of the police, and the certainty of punishment overtaking evildoers. Arrangements had already been completed to have Colonel Saunders of the North West Mounted Police to conduct the trial.

Meanwhile the company had turned over to the police the large council house wherein the factors had gathered in years gone by from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains to hold their annual councils and regulate the affairs of Rupert's Land.

Upon the day that Colonel Saunders and his party were due to arrive Sergeant Smith and Cashman left for Warren's Landing at the head of Lake Winnipeg, twenty miles away, to meet the steamer. At the barracks the prisoners were taking their daily exercise under the charge of a young constable. Suddenly the policeman noticed that Pe-ce-quan was missing.

"*Tante*, Pe-ce-quan?" he asked the chief.

"Dunno!" gruffly replied the Indian.

A hasty search of the barracks grounds failed to reveal any sign of the missing man, and the alarm was hastily spread. Pe-ce-quan had escaped.

"Quick, boys, search the woods," cried the thoroughly excited constable to some half-breed onlookers, but not a sign could be found of the prisoner. It was near nightfall when O'Neill returned from the fort and assisted the constable in his search. Through the drear and forbidding forest they made their way.

"Good God! What's that?" cried his companion hoarsely.

"What! Where?" demanded O'Neill in alarm as he shook off the convulsive grip upon his arm.

"There! Swinging from the branch of that tree," cried his companion, pointing to a dark object silhouetted against the darkening sky.

It was the lifeless body of Pe-ce-quan, hanging from a tree by his L'Assumption belt, which was knotted tightly around his neck. He had gone to meet the Manitou of the *Saulteaux*, but he had chosen his own time and place and had not died at the hands of the pale-faced usurpers of the Indians' hunting grounds.

On August 8, 1907, Mista-inniew stoically faced his accusers in the historic old council house which had witnessed many strange sights, but none more thrilling than those now taking place. Behind a large spruce table covered with a Union Jack sat Colonel Saunders, impressive in his immaculate uniform. Beside him sat the lawyers, attired in wigs and gowns, while behind stood the red-coated escort in charge of Mista-inniew and the Indians.

Opposite sat the jury; white-collared clerks of the fur company, moccasined traders, capoted French-Canadian voyageurs, and half-breed dog drivers, while priests, missionaries and Indians filled the balance of the hall. In front of the judge's table, looking somewhat nervous, was the interpreter, Jimmie Kirkness.

Without the slightest hesitation Mista-inniew pleaded guilty to the charge of murder, then told of what had happened in the lodge that cold October morning. They had decided, he and Pe-ce-quan, that Sap-was-te must die. Old Pe-ce-quan placed the fatal cord around her neck, and held her down as she struggled.

As the jury retired to consider the verdict the chief leaned back and stared stolidly at the heavy beams above him. Considerable sympathy was felt for the old chief, especially by the fur traders, who realized fully the extent to which these pagan Indians were swayed by superstition. But the police felt otherwise. There were four authenticated cases of killings at their hands, and evidence pointing to probably twenty others. These murders, and the domination of the medicine men, must cease, and that could only be accomplished by making an example. During the solemn silence that prevailed when the jurymen returned the chief listened unmoved while the sentence of death was passed upon him.

In a few days he was being taken across Lake Winnipeg, towards the dreaded stone house of the whites. But the sentence was never carried out, for upon the representations of the fur traders and others to the minister of justice, it was decided to temper justice with mercy and the sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life.

Three years later Mista-inniew's soul also passed on to the happy hunting grounds of his forefathers, for one morning his emaciated body was discovered lifeless upon his narrow prison cot by one of the wardens of Stoney Mountain Penitentiary.

Angus Rae and Norman Fiddler were not detained, but were sent back to their tribesmen to spread the word amongst them of the power of the whites, and of Mounted Police justice.

# CONQUERORS OF THE GREAT CANADIAN DIVIDE

By  
F. A. BEAUMONT

**S**TARTLED by the revolver shot, the two eagles rose with flurrying wings from the branch of the tree, circled in terror for a moment, then flew down a narrow valley running eastwards through the mountains.

The surveyor grinned as he replaced his revolver in its holster. Then suddenly his face became tense. With straining eyes he watched the flight of the disappearing eagles. They sped unhesitatingly, straight as arrows, down the valley.

"I believe I've found it at last!" he exclaimed. For many weary weeks, Walter Moberly, assistant to the Surveyor-General for British Columbia, had been fighting his way through dense underbrush, wading through flooded rivers, scaling precipitous cliffs, in the seemingly hopeless search for a pass through the Gold Range Mountains. Time and again he had found just such a valley, only to discover it was a "blind" leading him once more to these towering, defiant peaks. But now the sixth sense of the born explorer told him that he was right.

Twenty years later the last spike of the Canadian Pacific Railway was to be driven in that valley, where the steel highways from the Atlantic and the Pacific met, and the "impossible dream" of spanning Canada with an iron road was realized at last.

This great adventure began as far back as 1857. An imperial commission was set up in that year "to inquire into the suitability of the colony of Canada for settlement, and the advisability of constructing a transcontinental line of railway through British territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and thus to connect and at the same time to provide a safer and more direct means of communicating with the British possessions in the Orient."

Captain Palliser, an officer of the Waterford Artillery Militia, was appointed leader of a party of explorers who wandered for four years in a wilderness extending from the snowy wastes of the far north to the boundary line in the south, and from the

western shores of Lake Superior to the distant waters of the Pacific.

During this long exploration, which entailed the survey of the entire interior of unknown Canada, Dr. James Hector discovered one of the great passes through which the railway now runs—Kicking Horse Pass in the Rocky Mountains. The name of this pass and its nearby river were inspired by the sardonic wit of the true pioneer, for it was here that Captain Palliser was badly kicked by one of the pack horses.

But in spite of this important discovery, Palliser reported to the British Government that there was little or no possibility of building an all-Canadian railway. "The knowledge of the country as a whole," he wrote, "would never lead me to advocate a line of communication from Canada across the continent to the Pacific, exclusively through British territory."

On his way back to England, Palliser met Walter Moberly, destined to become one of the chief pathfinders for the railway. He confided to Moberly that it was impossible to construct a line through British Columbia, as the Gold Range to the west of the Columbia River presented an unbroken and impassable barrier.

Moberly, however, had his own ideas on the subject. Five years later he organized a light party to explore the Gold, Selkirk, and Rocky Mountains. It was after a forced march to the south arm of the Great Shuswap Lake that he fired his revolver at the sitting eagles and made the historic discovery of Eagle Pass.

Lack of food prevented the explorer from following the flight of the eagles for more than a short distance. He returned to the head of Shuswap Lake, and led his party over the watershed to the Columbia River. After dispatching his Indian carriers for more supplies, he started down the Columbia River to connect with another branch of his party at the head of Upper Arrow Lake.

"We swept along at a grand rate," he said later, "and, at last, found the river getting narrow, with high rocky banks and overhanging cliffs. I was in the middle of the canoe, taking bearings, estimating distance, etc., the Indian boy in the bow, and Perry steering. The boy suddenly exclaimed, 'Bad water—all will be killed!' He put in his paddle and lay down in the bottom of the canoe.

"I crawled over him, and, getting hold of his paddle, Perry

and I managed to keep the canoe out of the whirls that threatened to suck us down. At one moment we were on the edge of one of these dangerous places, and the next swept a hundred yards away by a tremendous 'boil.' Sometimes one end of the canoe became the bow, and at other times the opposite end; but at length we reached a little sandy cove and landed in still water."

Moberly hoped to obtain supplies from the branch party, but owing to some misunderstanding, they did not arrive at the appointed rendezvous. There was nothing for it but to set off up river again to meet his Indians returning with supplies.

This return journey he always regarded as the most dangerous exploit of his career as a surveyor. The river was in spate, threatening to swamp and overturn the little canoe at every moment. Poling against the swift and powerful current demanded terrific effort: for every yard the canoe made headway it seemed to be swept back two. Soaked and exhausted, Moberly at length regained his starting-place on the Columbia River.

Later, he made an arduous ascent of the mountains on the west side of the Columbia River. His object was to reach the ridge range. He was so determined to find a pass that he was ready, if necessary, to follow the ridge to the boundary line.

As dusk was falling, he stood on the summit of a high peak, and saw a valley extending to the distant Shuswap Lake, a continuation of it running westward to the Columbia River, and also a valley extending far to the southward.

Was this the end of his quest? It was too late for further exploration, but that night Moberly scarcely closed his eyes. Before daylight, he rose, stole away from his sleeping companions, and hurried to the bottom of the valley. On reaching the stream, he found the water flowing westward. There was a low valley to the eastward. It was the valley of the eagles!

Moberly blazed a cedar tree, and wrote upon it: "This is the pass for the overland railway."

But the great task he had set himself had only begun. Immediately opposite Eagle Pass a river emerged from a deep gorge to join the Columbia from the east. Drenched by icy torrential rain, Moberly forced his way up this gorge, fighting through dense and lacerating scrub, climbing over huge jagged rocks and fallen trees, until he reached the point where the river divided into two streams. One emerged from a valley with a north-east bearing, the other from a valley running easterly. It

was this latter valley, Moberly decided, which would be most likely to possess a pass through the Selkirks.

Winter had set in. Blizzards and mists swept the Selkirk Range, threatening the hardiest and most intrepid climber with mortal accident, or with the peril of being lost, to die of cold and starvation. "I'm going over it," said Moberly, frenzied at every hour's delay in his attempt to find the new pass.

But his Indians were adamant. Everyone would be caught in the snow. No one had ever got out of those mountains alive in winter. To go on meant certain death, they said.

In a fury of disappointment, Moberly abandoned his exploration of the valley there and then. But he reported to the British Columbian Government his belief that the only feasible pass through the Selkirk Range would probably be found in that region. He urged that future exploration should be made in the south-easterly branch of the river, which he had named the Illecillewaet (Indian for "fast-flowing stream").

Sixteen years later, Major Rogers, an American engineer in the service of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, set off with his nephew Albert up the Illecillewaet Valley to discover if Moberly was right in his surmise that a gateway through the Selkirks could be found in that region. Rogers's survey is an amazing record of fearlessness, energy and endurance.

His plan was to set off from the Pacific coast and make his way through an unexplored mountain country until he met another branch of his party, on the east side of the Rockies, in two months' time.

After a long and arduous journey from St. Paul, he reached Kamloops, where he obtained the outfit needed for his trek through the wilderness. Kamloops was a settlement on the Thompson River, where the Jesuits had founded a mission.

Rogers had estimated his requirements for the trip with a thoroughness that was typical of the man. He wanted ten Indians. Each must be willing to journey from sun up to sun down without a trail, and carrying one hundred pounds on his back. He had also calculated to a nicety how little food each man could do this on—for he was resolved to travel light.

He discussed these points at some length with old Chief Louie of the Shuswap tribe, as they sat before his cabin door one spring evening. There was quite a demand just then for Indians who were reliable in the bush and able to stand a tumpline, so Louie listened unmoved to the thin white man, with wide flow-

ing whiskers, whose vehemence belied his fifty years. Ultimately, Rogers barked an offer which was acceptable to Louie; he nodded silently, and motioned thither a nearby Jesuit father to sanctify the agreement.

Rogers's reputation as a man who spared neither himself nor anyone else when there was a job of work on hand, was known throughout the Pacific coast. But even his nephew was surprised by the terms on which he enlisted the services of ten stalwart Indians. Each was given to understand that if he so much as grumbled once at the arduous of the journey, he would be sent back without a letter of good report, all his wages would be confiscated by the Church, and Chief Louie would lay one hundred lashes on the bare back of the offender!

A small steamer was chartered to take the party to the mouth of the Eagle River—the last outpost of civilization—on Shuswap Lake. After fourteen days' strenuous travel, they reached the Columbia River. It was a swollen torrent with the heavy rains, quarter of a mile wide, and of abysmal depth. They had no boat. But it had to be crossed somehow.

Rogers turned to the Indians. "Make a raft," he said. They stared at him in dumb amazement. "Go on, get busy!" he snapped.

After two hours, the Indians had lashed together a dubious conglomeration of cedar logs. It floated well above the surface, but settled down ominously when five hundred pounds of flour, two hundred of bacon, salt, baking powder, rifles, rope, two dwarf tents, blankets and axes had been heaped on it.

The two white men stepped cautiously aboard. "This raft is sinking!" cried Albert. Rogers grinned. "It'll last till we get across," he said.

But it could obviously carry no more, and the Indians hung back. "Paddle and grab, blast you!" snapped Rogers.

Pushing off the raft, the Indians waded in to their necks, and, each with one hand holding on to the raft, and swimming with the other, they managed to impel it across and land in safety.

At this point the river was flowing from the north. But it had come from the south, on the farther side of the Selkirks, describing a fiddle-shaped bend of about a hundred and eight miles in total length. Rogers wanted to save a hundred miles of railway by, so to speak, cutting across the neck of the fiddle. To do this, he would have to find a pass suitable for the great iron



road amid snow-capped ranges never trodden before by the foot of man.

The days were very long at this season, and the party travelled from early till late. But though Rogers urged on the party with demoniacal frenzy, the going was so difficult that in the first five days only sixteen miles were covered.

They had to wade waist-deep through swamps, climb precipitous rocks, detour round lakes, and literally hack their way through man-high underbrush. Gigantic fallen trees blocked their path, treacherous mudfalls almost engulfed them, times without number, to certain destruction.

But worst of all was the fiendish "devil's club," growing eight feet high in dense jungles, and bristling with sharp poisonous spines. Without an axe, it was impossible to force a way through it, and even so, one emerged lacerated and bleeding, and as full of spines as a hedgehog. After a patch of devil's club, a man had to sit down at once and remove every spine from his body, for a broken spine in the flesh caused immediate festering.

And through all this, each Indian supported a hundred pounds of supplies on the back of his neck. "I am convinced," reported Albert Rogers somewhat naively, "that but for the fear of the penalty of returning without their letters of good report, our Indians would have deserted us."

Major Rogers, though a hard man-driver, had plenty of shrewd common sense. He realized that this unflagging effort would soon result in the little party being too exhausted to move. So he ordered them to proceed in twenty minutes' runs, going "all out," with five-minute rests in between. He timed these halts and starts with a stop-watch.

Soaked to the skin by rain and swamp, their limbs and faces torn and bleeding as they struggled through the brush, they reached the forks of the Illecillewaet, and found the valley which Moberly had described in his report as the direction most likely to lead to a pass through the Selkirks. Following the east fork for a mile and a half, they came to a tremendous canyon. Here, far below, the river whose course they were following changed into a roaring torrent. This magnificent gorge was later named Albert Canyon, in honour of Rogers's nephew.

For several days the surveyors struggled onwards through forests in which the vast trees were often smashed to matchwood by avalanches of snow from the mountains. Later, the river divided, and in front of Major Rogers loomed the snowcaps of

the main Selkirk Range. The finding of a route for the great national thoroughfare depended on the possible gateways through the mountains at the head of either of these forks of the river.

Their food rations were now almost at vanishing point. At first, Major Rogers thought he would leave the Indians behind, but later feared that if he did so they would make off with the remaining supplies. He therefore decided to cache everything that would hinder travel, and, accompanied by the Indians, make a forced march up the north fork to the summit of the range.

With only two days' rations left, the party started over the snow, in the lee of Mount Sir Donald, climbing steadily upwards until they reached a large, level gap. When they had traversed this, they discovered that the water again separated, flowing east and west.

The ascent grew steeper and steeper. Cutting fir sticks to aid them in their climb, they toiled upwards towards a belt of forest which Major Rogers had observed, about half-way up the mountain.

Exhaustion, hunger and exposure now marked unmistakably the face of every man. Each was gaunt with the suffering endured while struggling in icy rain, loaded with heavy packs, through "Satan's own country."

They ascended beyond the forest belt, and now the climb became intensely perilous. They stumbled across new-fallen avalanches, swarmed up crevices, won blind toe-holds round corners lulled in snow, clung like spiders to rifts in the solid rock, and groped, with uncertain fingers, for slippery ledges where they might pull themselves ever upwards.

Four of the Indians had tied their pack straps to each other's belts. The leading Indian, striving to reach an upper ledge, slipped and fell back suddenly on the others. All four dropped headlong from their ledge thirty feet to a steep incline, and rolling over and over, tangled in their pack straps, disappeared from view over a lower ledge.

"Our hearts were in our mouths," Albert Rogers reported, "fearing the worst might have happened to them. Dead Indians were easily buried, but men with broken legs, to be carried out through such a country, and with barely food enough to take us back to the Columbia River on a forced march, made a problem which even strong men dreaded to face.

"Anyone who has been a mountain climber knows that there

are times when going down is a great deal more dangerous and difficult than going up. Slowly descending, we had nearly reached the timber line when one of our Indians, with an exclamation, pointed to four black specks moving across a snow-slide far below. Our glasses were quickly turned on them. There they were, and, to our great relief, all were on their pins making down the mountain as fast as possible."

Though many hours had now been lost for climbing, Major Rogers was determined to reach the top. Almost collapsing with cold and weariness, the party toiled on upwards. And at last, long after the sun had set, they reached the summit.

A view extended before them such as is seen only once in a lifetime. For miles around they were encircled by vistas of lofty peaks, each towering out of eddies of snow. It was as awe-inspiring and desolate as if it were some region of the moon. In the distance they could see the upper Columbia Valley, infinitely lovely in the bluish haze, and beyond, the stark magnificence of the Rockies.

And far, far below was the timbered valley of which Moberly had dreamed. "The pass at last!" cried Rogers.

The surveyors felt the perspiration freeze on them. They had no wood for a fire. They whipped each other with tumplines to keep warm. They stamped their feet in the snow to prevent frost-bite. They nibbled their bannock and dry meat and ate snow to quench their thirst. Then they wrapped themselves in their meagre blankets, and lay down on a narrow ledge to endure the icy hours of darkness.

But they thrilled with exultation. They had found the Rogers Pass, through which a tornado of steel would one day blaze the trail of civilization across the "impassable" Selkirks.

Thanks to men like Moberly and Rogers, the great vision of a trans-Canada railway was drawing nearer and nearer fulfilment. Then suddenly political difficulties began to present a seemingly insuperable barrier.

The provinces that composed British North America in those days were separate, almost independent, and, in some cases, isolated. A proposal was made to link these provinces together in closer co-operation.

British Columbia, however, refused to have anything to do with a federation unless she was brought into direct communication with East Canada and the Atlantic by means of a railway.

In 1871, Sir John Macdonald, prime minister of Canada,

accepted his stipulation and promised British Columbia that the railway should be completed by 1881.

The new project for a railway of three thousand miles across Canada entailed a stupendous task of exploration and detailed surveying. For instance, no maps existed of the great forests of Ontario, of the desert wastes north of Lake Superior, of the vast buffalo-tracked prairies, or of five hundred miles of mountains, all of which had to be charted for a possible railway route.

This colossal survey, with its myriad problems, was entrusted to Sandford Fleming, a world-renowned Scottish-born engineer. His company of surveyors was augmented by various specialists, whose duty it was to report on the botanical, geological, climatic and geographic features in the territory explored, and also to plan the location of a telegraph.

Fleming's expedition first made its way through the forests of Ontario. During most of this journey they had to hew their way westwards with axes. Then they went on to Fort Garry the Hudson Bay trading post, next to Edmonton, and later, bearing westwards, along the Athabasca River and into the Rockies.

Here the obstacles suggested a giant's playground. Huge rocks, forests which were a mass of fallen trees, deep glacial torrents had to be circumvented daily.

Traversing the Miette River Valley, Fleming crossed into British Columbia and descended by the western slope of the Rockies, following the Fraser River. After passing Mount Robson, one of Canada's finest peaks, he reached Tete Jaune Cache and, turning south-east, pursued the Canoe River Valley to Kamloops. Here he met trails blazed by those old pioneering explorers, Thompson and Fraser, and ultimately reached the Pacific Ocean.

Fleming's party was the first to travel over the entire route of the transcontinental railway between Lake Superior and the Pacific, and thus the great surveyor linked up for the first time the three mountain passes discovered by Hector, Moberly and Rogers. In his diary, Fleming reveals some of the perils and hardships the pathfinders had to endure.

"We have to cross gorges so narrow that a biscuit might be thrown from the last horse descending to the bell-horse six hundred feet ahead, ascending the opposite side.

"The fires have been running through the woods and are still burning. Many of the half-burnt trees have been blown down,

probably by the gale of last night, obstructing the trail and making advance extremely difficult."

(Though Fleming does not mention it, his party was in constant peril from the blackened trunks of forest giants falling on them after fires had been raging.)

"The trail now takes another character. A series of precipices runs sheer up from the boiling current to form a contracted canyon. A path has, therefore, been traced along the hillside, ascending to the elevation of some seven or eight hundred feet. For a long distance not a vestige of vegetation is to be seen.

"On the steep acclivity our line of advance is narrow, so narrow that there is scarcely a foothold. Nevertheless, we have to follow for some six miles this thread of trail, which seemed to us by no means in excess of the requirements of the chamois and the mountain goat.

"We cross clay, rock and gravel slides at a giddy height. To look down gives one an uncontrollable dizziness, to make the head swim and the view unsteady, even with men of tried nerve.

"I do not think I can ever forget that terrible walk. It was the greatest trial I have ever experienced. We are from five to eight hundred feet high on a path of from ten to fifteen inches wide and at some points almost obliterated, with slopes above and below us so steep that a stone would roll into the torrent in the abyss below.

"There are no trees or branches or twigs which we can grip to aid us in our advance on the narrow, precarious footing. We become more sensible to the difficulties we encounter each step as we go forward. The sun came out with unusual power. Our day's effort has caused no little of a strain, and the perspiration is running from us like water. I myself felt as if I had been dragged through a brook, for I was without a dry shred on me."

When they reached the barrier of the Selkirks, Rogers himself accompanied Fleming part of the way to the pass Rogers had discovered, and his nephew went the entire distance.

After descending from the Rogers Pass, Fleming made his way towards Kamloops, struggling through an unexplored wilderness where some of the worst trials of the journey were experienced. Torrents of rain drenched the surveyors: tall ferns and devil's club made them so sore and weary that they had to rest every few minutes. Through the alder swamps progress fell to little more than three miles a day.

• "It rained all night," reads one entry in Fleming's diary.

"None of the men had a tent, and they nestled by the trees and obtained what protection they could. Our waterproofs were divided among them as far as they would go, and such as did not possess them were more or less drenched.

"The walking is wretchedly bad. We make little headway, and every tree, every leaf, is wet and casts off the rain. In a short time we are as drenched as the foliage.

"We have many fallen trees to climb, and it is no slight matter to struggle over trees ten feet and upwards in diameter. We have rocks to ascend and descend; we have a marsh to cross in which we sink often to the middle. For half an hour we have waded, I will not say picked, our way to the opposite side, through a channel filled with stagnant water, having an odour long to be remembered. Skunk cabbage is here indigenous, and is found in acres of stinking perfection.

"We clamber to the higher ground, hoping to find an easier advance, and we come upon the trail of a cariboo, but it leads to the mountains. We try another course, only to become entangled in a windfall of prostrate trees.

"The rain continues falling incessantly; the men, with heavy loads on their heads, made heavier by the water which has soaked into them, become completely disheartened, and at half-past two o'clock we decide to camp. Our travelling today extended only over three hours. We have not advanced above a mile and a half of actual distance, and we all suffer greatly from fatigue."

So the nightmare advance continued. They reached the canyon of the Illecillewaet, where they had to clamber from rock to rock by seizing roots and branches, "swinging ourselves occasionally like experienced acrobats." Often the loads had to be unpacked while the men hauled one another up from one ledge to another. They crawled under waterfalls, scaled precipitous bluffs. "They were insurmountable," records one member of the party, "but we had to go forward now or die of starvation."

But the fates reserved their grimmest trial for them until they emerged from the Illecillewaet Canyon, where they expected to be met by a party from Kamloops with supplies. All that they had suffered seemed as naught when they found that the relief party, under their leader, McLean, had not arrived.

They obtained canoes from Indians and crossed the Columbia River. After a night's rest on the western bank, they decided to push on towards Eagle Pass, leaving behind tents, blankets, baggage and everything else except their scanty remnant of food.

But fortune smiled again, for that very morning they met McLean and his band of Indians. He explained that detours caused by fallen trees, rocks and swamps had been responsible for the delay. He had a further disappointment for Fleming—he had been forced to leave the provisions at a cache, five days' journey away!

In single file, the travellers set off for Eagle Pass, guided by an Indian who promised them a short cut to the country where the provisions were cached. They reached the summit of Eagle Pass, and three days later, when they had finished literally the last crumb of food, arrived at the cache. The rest of the long journey was accomplished without further mishap.

Fleming's epic survey was completed, correlating the earlier discoveries of Hector, Moberly, and Rogers into its magnificent framework.

The pathfinders had at last mapped out a route for the great Canadian Pacific Railway to span the three thousand miles from coast to coast and transform a colony scattered through a wilderness into a civilized continent.

# HERO OF THE SQUADRON OF DEATH

*By*  
CURTIS C. ASTOR

**T**HERE is a man alive today who has on his body the wounds of thirty-six sensational air crashes. He has had his neck broken and his back dislocated. A dozen scars attest to piercings by broken propellers, flying cylinder heads, motor parts and caved-in fuselages. His ribs have been broken nine times. And each of these injuries has been caused by a deliberate accident or by taking a risk that might end in death.

He is Dick Grace, only survivor of Hollywood's original Squadron of Death. At the age of forty-five, he is the grand old man of stunt aviators, a strange gang of men who will risk their lives daily for the sake of thrills in films.

Grace has now retired from stunting. One used to meet him in film studios and in cafés, a quiet, rather small man, who never indulged in mock heroics and seemed rather apologetic for leading such an exciting life.

His love of flying began at an early age. When he was a boy he wanted to fly. He watched birds, how they glided, how they climbed, dived and banked without moving a wing tip. And he envied them.

When he grew older, and aviation was striding out of its infancy, he decided that he would be an airman. The war was his great opportunity and, by lying about his age, he enlisted in the American Air Force. There he acquired the thorough knowledge of aviation which has enabled him to take incredible risks in the air without killing himself.

After the war he drifted, almost penniless, to Hollywood, where a friend got him a job as a property man. There, one day, he watched a stunt man prepare to take a forty-foot dive into a net. Young Grace was thrilled. During the war he had enjoyed taking risks, and now he secretly envied the man who was quietly preparing for a stunt which would thrill many cinema audiences. But the stunt man was not feeling so calm as he looked. Everything was in readiness and the director had given the signal for



the stunt to begin. The man looked down from the platform and, as he saw the net far beneath him, his nerve failed. He gave a gesture of despair and shouted out: "I'm sorry, but I can't do it."

For a moment, Dick Grace felt sorry for him. He had seen men lose their nerve during war time, and knew that it was a very unpleasant sensation. But a sudden impulse made him decide that he would like to try the stunt. He climbed up the ladder on to the platform, and shouted to the director: "Are you ready?"

The director hesitated for a moment. Then he shouted back: "You have to turn twice in the air before you hit the net. Can you do it?"

"Yes," called Grace.

"O.K. Wait until I give the word. Then jump."

Grace now wished that he had not been so eager. He began to appreciate the feelings of the man who had failed. But it was too late to draw back. He looked down at a sea of upturned faces and then he heard the fatal word "Jump."

He said years later that he was so surprised that he lost his balance. One foot slipped off the stand and the next minute he was tumbling and turning through the air. By the time he hit the net, he was beginning to enjoy himself. He landed perfectly, square on his back between the shoulders and the base of his spine. "That was grand," shouted the director. "The most natural fall I've ever seen in my life." From that moment Grace was a Hollywood stunt man.

Soon he had built up quite a reputation for himself. Directors trusted him because he made no flamboyant claims. When they told him what they wanted him to do, Grace thought out the stunt carefully. If he said it couldn't be done except by gravely risking his life, they knew that it was not just cowardice that made him hesitate. They listened to his suggestions for altering the stunt, so that he had an even chance of escaping alive.

Naturally, most of his daring stunts were connected with aviation. In the air he was ready for every kind of risk. He crashed planes, he performed the most hair-raising aerial acrobatics, he jumped from one plane to another at ninety miles an hour, and walked calmly on the wings in the teeth of a head wind which strove to throw him off into space.

Often he injured himself and was in hospital for several weeks. But he escaped alive because of his careful preparations. Upon many occasions he would be at work on an aeroplane that he had to crash, sawing off something here, padding this part, half sawing

through that, building a steel frame to minimise the risk of being pinned in his seat and being burned to death.

He preferred to make his crashes in biplanes because these had the advantage of two solidly constructed wings, which lessened the force of impact. A monoplane, he said, crumbled as easily as glass. An open cockpit plane, weighing about three thousand pounds, was his favourite for general stunt purposes. The pilot's chances of leaving an open cockpit in case of fire were obviously greater. Otherwise he had few prejudices. He always carried a silver ring given to him by an English girl during the war, he always wore tennis shoes, and he insisted that all his crashes should be performed within a few minutes of 11.45 a.m. This was because he always maintained that meteorological conditions were better and the wind steadier.

One day he was asked to go to see William Wellman, a well-known Hollywood director, who was just beginning work on a war film called *Wings*. Wellman immediately came to the point. "I want several air crashes for this film, which is going to be the most realistic war film yet made. We could fake some of the scenes, but that would spoil the atmosphere. We want the real thing.

"The first crash is a plane being shot down by two German machines. It dives into No Man's Land and is smashed up pretty badly. And I mean No Man's Land. There will be barbed wire and shell holes galore. It's going to be difficult because you have got to choose the point where you will crash before you begin, and make sure that you hit it. You have to avoid the wire, and at the same time end the plane on its back, not more than fifty feet from the nearest camera. If you are farther away than that the cameras won't get satisfactory shots, and the crash will be useless."

"What about the other crashes?" asked Grace.

"One is to drive a plane into a brick building, and the third is to crash a machine immediately after it takes to the air. There will be a fourth accident—but I haven't yet decided what it will be."

Grace was silent for some time. "It's a tall order," he said at last, "but I'll think it over"—and his answer was yes.

He chose to smash the plane into No Man's Land as his first stunt. His policy was always to choose the easier stunts first, so that he would not hold up the picture if he had an accident during the more difficult ones.

The plane that he had to use was an old-fashioned wartime

machine, that was made partly of wood. Grace had studied its construction closely, and he made several alterations so that the risk of injury would be lessened. He altered the position of the petrol tank, for example, to avoid the possibility of fire, and also had some steel tubing concealed in the cockpit to keep it from collapsing at the impact.

The stunt was timed to take place not far from Hollywood, at ten-thirty on a morning in September. A hundred or so technicians and spectators gathered to watch this superb display of aerial skill. It was a queer setting. Here was a field which had been turned into a No Man's Land, and looked just like a battle-field somewhere in France. Much of the realism, however, had been carefully faked. The ground had been sifted and all stones had been removed, and a layer of crumbled cork had been put down. This was done not only to avoid any risk of Grace being injured by some flying object, but also to ensure that no one would be hurt in the shell fire scenes that followed.

There was an atmosphere of tenseness and expectancy on that September morning. Everyone had the fear in the back of his mind that perhaps, in less than an hour, he might see a tragedy in this quiet field. The coolest man on the set was Dick Grace himself. He had been playing a game of cards with a friend and seemed a trifle irritated that he had not had time to finish it before doing his stunt.

Someone muttered, "He can't come out of that crash alive." Grace heard it and turned to him. "Would you care to bet on it?" The man hesitated before saying reluctantly, "Yes—all right." Grace looked round at the rest. "Any more takers?" But the rest shook their heads. There's no fun in betting when you will be praying that you lose.

Now came the signal that all was ready. Dick Grace climbed into his plane, and one man began to say, "All the ——"

"Shut up, you fool," his neighbour hissed. "Dick hates for anyone to wish him good luck before a stunt. He thinks it is unlucky."

He was off. The plane taxied along the ground, rose suddenly and was soon high up in the sky. Several other planes followed, and the watchers settled down to wait.

The scene was supposed to be a dog fight over the front line. The hero of the film, for whom Grace was doubling, got caught in the fight, and was attacked by two German planes which settled on his tail and filled his machine with bullets. Then he went off

into a spin and ended with a crash into No Man's Land. That was how the scenario writer had written it; now it was Dick's job to bring it to life.

The director, William Wellman, watched the planes forming position in the sky, and turned to an assistant. "O.K. Hoist the red flag signal."

After a moment's pause, those watching saw Grace's plane suddenly nose earthwards. One of the German planes shot over him, and for one sickening moment a collision seemed inevitable. But Grace continued his fall, with the other two machines circling round him.

That fall seemed to take an hour, but it could only have been a few seconds. He was coming earthwards at a terrific speed, the plane seemingly right out of control. Grace said afterwards that his speed was ninety-five miles an hour.

Now he was less than fifty feet from the ground. "Oh, God," someone moaned, "he can never do it." Then, when he was about twenty feet away, the wing dipped and the fuselage swayed to the left. With a dull thud the wing hit and crumpled, then the landing carriage crashed. The plane fell over to the other wing and smashed that. Then the plane collapsed on its back.

A tendency on the part of spectators to run forward to help him was immediately checked. It would spoil the scene. They waited and, after an agonizing wait, saw Grace ease himself out of the plane, run a few yards and drop into a shell hole.

There was a sigh of relief. That was according to instructions. Then one of the technicians pressed a button, and there was a sudden explosion about fifty feet from where Grace was hiding. That, too, was according to plan.

"O.K.," said Wellman. "Cut."

Grace came out of his hole just as Wellman reached him. "Thank God you're safe," he exclaimed, in genuine relief. But Grace wasn't listening. He walked to the plane and began examining the cockpit. Then he pulled out a thick wooden post, and said, "Well, can you beat that?"

"What's the matter, Dick?" asked Wellman.

"This post," he replied. "When we crashed, I ducked my head forward in case of accidents, and with a terrific crash something wedged between my flying coat and the back of the seat. I wondered what it was—and this was it."

"When the plane went over on its back it plunged into those posts. Two of them went completely through the fuselage. One

of them went near the tail and the other—this one—penetrated the cockpit just eleven inches behind my head.”

If he hadn't moved forward when he did he would have had that post full on his head.

Having greeted the cameraman and learned that he had crashed within seventeen feet of the nearest camera, he collected his winnings from the bet and had some lunch. Then he went on with the game of cards which had been interrupted by the stunt.

He said—quite cheerfully—later that when the plane finally came to a standstill, there was only six inches between his head and the ground.

To those who know nothing of aviation, his second stunt, which was to crash a machine immediately after it had taken off, may sound a much less dangerous stunt, but Grace did not think so. And when it was delayed for some days because of weather conditions, he was in a state of feverish impatience. He could not sleep properly, and when he did doze off, he invariably dreamed of the crash.

Yet when he went out on to the flying field his nerves were as steady as ever.

Crashing a plane at over one hundred miles an hour, with little time in which to manœuvre the machine into the best position, was a tall order, and Grace had a hunch that something unexpected would happen.

It did. The landing gear, which was of steel, withstood the impact of the crash and the injured wing lifted from the ground. It was caught by a current of wind, and the plane jumped into the air again.

Grace thought quickly. If he travelled much farther, the pictures taken by the camera would be useless. Without hesitation, he nosed the plane towards the ground. There was a sickening crash, Grace felt himself being flung against the instrument board and realized vaguely that his head had broken through it. He knew no more.

The men watching the crash realized that something was wrong. They dashed over to the machine and found Grace lying unconscious three feet away. Although unaware of what he was doing after hitting his head on the instrument board, he had subconsciously clambered back into the cockpit and then crawled on to the ground.

There was an ambulance waiting at the field in case of accidents, and Wellman, the director, gave orders for Grace to

be put inside. The airman, however, recovered consciousness just as he was being lifted into it, felt a terrible pain in his head and cried: "My head—don't lift me."

They laid him on the ground, and he stayed there in silence for some minutes. The pain in his neck and shoulders made him feel sick, but he refused angrily when Wellman suggested that he should go to hospital. He demanded instead that they should help him to his feet. There was that burning pain again, but he braced himself and staggered up.

A cameraman, thinking that he was only shaken, came forward and asked him to pose for a picture with the director. "Not now," snapped Wellman. "Can't you see the man is hurt?" But Grace stubbornly insisted upon the photograph being taken, and grouped himself with Wellman.

Some minutes later, when the picture had duly been taken, Grace said, "Well, aren't you going to take the picture?"

"How many do you want?" jeered the photographer. "I've taken it."

Grace knew then that he had been unconscious while standing before the camera. He decided that he would go to his hotel and rest. "It would be quieter at the hospital," said Wellman, hopefully, but Grace went to the hotel.

It was two days later that at last he decided to see a doctor. Then he was told that he had broken his neck; that his sixth cervical vertebra was dislocated; and that, by all the laws of medicine, he ought to be dead.

After this experience, Grace was told that he should never stunt again. The slightest accident might kill him. For the moment he thought that was sensible advice, and retired from the game. But soon he was bored by inactivity and was back in Hollywood as a stunt man, doing more dare-devil tricks than ever.

Two of Grace's worst experiences have been with fire, perhaps because he had dreaded it ever since childhood.

Upon the first occasion there seemed absolutely no risk at all. Grace was asked to stand on a ledge at the fifth floor of a blazing building, and to jump into a fire net below. Genuine firemen had been engaged to handle the net, and there was a fully equipped fire engine standing by to deal with the blaze as soon as Grace had jumped clear. The only possible snag was a group of telephone wires which hung near the building.

The house was, of course, only a dummy one which had been erected in the studio grounds and, in order to make the whole

thing as realistic as possible, cans of black powder, huge piles of paper and old film were stacked at the base of the set. Then everything was soaked in petrol.

Grace climbed up to his ledge on the fifth floor, and signalled that he was ready. "Light the fire," shouted the director, and men with flaming torches ran forward and threw them at the base of the building.

It had been anticipated that a few minutes would elapse before the whole house caught fire, but some error in judgment had been made. There was a sudden explosion, and then the building was a mass of flames.

Grace shrank back against the wall to shield himself from the flames, but he could find no protection. The fire swept round him, and the heat raised huge blisters on his body.

Meantime, nearly everyone on the ground had lost their heads. The fire engine was powerless to cope with the blaze, and the heat was so terrific that the firemen could not get near enough to enable Grace to make the sixty feet jump into the net. Twice they tried, and twice they were forced back.

"The scene which had been so peaceful a few seconds before was now pandemonium," writes Dick Grace, describing the adventure in his book, *Squadron of Death*. "Women were crying; men were hysterical. The director, most of all, seemed to have lost his composure. I could hear him helplessly shouting, 'For God's sake get the net under there! Do something, you fool!'

"A last effort of the firemen, and they got the net almost in place. Almost. Right under the telephone wires, which were strung parallel to the windows of the third storey. But it gave me my only chance.

"I dived head first towards the pavement, and shivered as I saw it rise up at me. Then, as I passed the wires at the third storey, I put my hands out far behind me. I felt the wire slide past the muscles of my arms, and partly closed my hands. A sudden jerk! I had caught there momentarily, flipping my body under the wires and into the net. A few seconds later the whole wall collapsed."

It was a terrifying experience, yet when he was asked to double for another fire scene some years later, he agreed instantly.

For this stunt he had to double for a girl wearing a ballet dress. According to the story, she was in a dance hall and her dress caught fire during a drunken brawl. Wreathed in flames,

she dashed out on a balcony and jumped to the ground, twenty feet below.

Scenario writers, however, only have to write these scenes. If they had to perform them perhaps they would be a little more sparing with their drama.

Dick Grace appeared on the set in the girl's ballet dress, much to the amusement of the studio workers, who began twitting him about his new role. But although he by no means looked like a girl, his shortness would enable the director to fake the scenes so that cinema audiences would really believe that he was the girl.

When he came on the set it was noticed that he seemed a trifle ill at ease. But he gave the word to begin, and the director said, "Set him on fire."

A property boy stepped forward nervously and touched his flimsy skirts with a lighted match. In a second the flames were leaping up—completely out of control. Once again, something had gone wrong.

Everyone on the studio floor gasped in horror as Grace threw up his arms and shouted, "My God, I'm burning to death." He leaped down some stairs, fell heavily, then recovered himself and began running round in circles. "Put me out," he screamed.

An assistant director was the only man who kept his nerve sufficiently to be able to cope with the situation. He moved into the centre of the floor and then, as Grace rushed past him, he put out his foot. Grace tripped and fell, and the man sprang on top of him.

"Blankets, bring blankets," he gasped.

A property boy dashed forward with blankets, and the assistant director flung them round the burning man. For fully two minutes he fought the flames. As he smothered them round Grace's head, they suddenly shot out round his legs. Then when he dealt with those, the flames began elsewhere. It had become a race with death, and fortunately Grace had lapsed into unconsciousness.

At last the flames were put out, and the burned body was carried into the studio hospital. There, when he recovered consciousness, Grace found that the skin had been burned off his body from head to waist.

It was several weeks before his terrible agony ceased and he began to look like a human being once more. And when at last he was well and ready to leave hospital, the doctor said, "Well, you have experienced all the agonies of being burned to death. Even if you had actually died you could not have suffered more."



Which was little consolation for a man who had had weeks of torture. But even that terrible experience could not make Grace agree to give up his work as a stunt man.

He had another narrow escape when he was asked to dive off a cliff into the sea. He felt rather doubtful about it as soon as he examined the spot, for there was only six feet of water and there were unpleasant jagged rocks jutting out of the sands.

However, he agreed to do the stunt. To his surprise, he found an old diving board on the cliff, which had apparently been installed some time before by another film company. He decided that he would use this for his dive.

The camera crew were in a motor launch near the spot where he was to dive, and in another launch was a man in a diving suit, ready to go to Grace's aid if he did not come up from his dive.

The signal was given, and Grace stepped forward towards the diving board. Then suddenly he felt cautious. He decided to test the board. Leaning forward, he grabbed it with one hand. Immediately it snapped, and Grace only just had time to move back before it began its noisy tumble down the cliffs.

Feeling a trifle shaken, he signalled to the men below that he was not quite ready. Then he began to search for a ledge on the cliff that was steady enough to support his weight. He found one, gave the "all clear" signal, and took one swift glance at the spot where he hoped to hit the water. Then he leaped off the ledge.

Unfortunately, he had not taken the power of the wind into consideration. He suddenly realized that he could not hope to make a clean dive, for the wind was throwing him off his balance. Thinking quickly, he decided to land in the water feet first, which was dangerous in such shallow water.

But even this was impossible. So, as he neared the water, he threw himself on his back. He crashed into the water, the force of the impact causing his back to sting badly. And as he rose to the surface, he saw that he had avoided a jagged rock by less than a foot. But for flopping on his back, he would have smashed his body to pieces.

Then came the time when Grace decided that he ought to retire from stunting. He was forty years old, he had smashed up his body on many occasions, and he was the only surviving member of the original Squadron of Death. But before retiring he wanted to make one more stunt, the most daring of his career.

He had written a book, *Squadron of Death*, which told the story of his life, and a film company wanted to make a picture based upon some of his hairbreadth escapes. It was called *The Lost Squadron*, and a famous star played the part of the hero, but it was Dick Grace, saying goodbye to stunting, who provided most of the thrills.

For his last crash he wanted to dive an aeroplane into the sea at ninety miles an hour. Everyone said that there were heavy odds against his escaping alive, but Grace studied the conditions closely and was convinced that he had a good chance.

He insisted, however, that a specially chartered ship should stand by, carrying a rescue crew, two surgeons, and an operating theatre.

The stunt was carried out in the Pacific, some miles from the Californian coast. Grace sat in a coastal aerodrome waiting for a wireless message that cameras were in position. Then he walked out to his plane, just as cool as ever, and began the flight out to sea.

After a few minutes' flying, he saw the ships bobbing on the sea and prepared himself for the downward dive. Then began the ninety miles an hour descent.

To those watching from the sea as the plane fell at terrific speed, it seemed impossible that he could escape alive. It was ironical, they thought, that he should kill himself just at the moment that he was retiring for ever.

The plane met the sea, and there was a sudden spurt of water. The rescue ship began its dash towards him, for every second counted unless he was to be drowned. Then, as they neared the wreckage, they saw his body floating in the sea. And when they picked him up he was unconscious but unhurt except for a few minor bruises.

When he recovered consciousness, they told him that such was the force of the impact, that his feet had been torn out of his shoes without the laces being disturbed.

And so, still undefeated, the greatest stunt merchant that Hollywood has ever known retired into private life.

# THE RACE TO THE POLE

*By*

MICHAEL GEELAN

THE world had grown old and wise and cunning before ever a human footprint was stamped, a symbol of the march of time, across that pale and eerie patch of solitude that is the South Pole.

Through timeless centuries it had brooded in lone and forbidding majesty, silent and enigmatical, screened by the snows, armoured by the ice, a defiant and impregnable fortress of nature in all its elemental power and beauty.

Oceans had been sounded and charted, the skies had been climbed, strange and hostile lands colonized, forests, swamps and jungles stripped of their terror and mystery, poisonous rivers navigated, lost cities excavated, the brows of mountains and the lips of volcanic craters kissed by the spirit of adventure. But not until 1911 was the heart of the Antarctic revealed in all its immaculate splendour.

The price of its ultimate surrender was human life and effort. Though let it be remembered that few objectives of such magnitude as this were ever attained with such a minimum of sacrifice and such a maximum of thrill and glory.

Much too regal and lovely ever to be regarded as ravished by conquest after such ages of splendid inscrutability and isolation, the Pole yielded in the end to a little breed of supermen as intrepid, as noble and as true as history can show. It compromised with their courage. It gave itself up in reward.

At three o'clock on the glum Antarctic afternoon of December 14, 1911, a group of men saluted their national flag, planted for the first time at the Pole.

It was the end of a race to the South Pole. A race between two great men, Roald Amundsen of Norway, and Robert Falcon Scott of Great Britain. The names of Amundsen and Scott will be linked for ever, for together in spirit and endeavour, though going their separate ways, these two incomparable adventurers changed man's knowledge of the known world.

What men they were! Amundsen was thirty-nine. Scott was forty-three. In their youth they were cast in strangely different

moulds. Born in the country district of south-east Norway a long way from the sea, Amundsen eventually became a medical student. But in his dreams he was lured more by the salted edge of a sea-breeze than by the keen, cold blade of the surgeon's knife. A predestined adventurer and explorer, he was drawn irresistibly towards the sea. Eventually, in 1903-6, he led an expedition of himself and six companions through the North West Passage in a little sloop of forty-seven tons, and succeeded in fixing the position of the magnetic North Pole.

Scott, for his part, had been weaned on the very breath of the sea. Born in Devonport, Plymouth, the streets of which had known illustrious sea dogs, he was a sailor from the first, as man and boy a proud and happy member of the royal navy. In 1900-4 he commanded the National Antarctic Expedition.

For these two men polar exploration had an intoxicating glamour. Except for gigantic, glowering Mount Everest it was the last great challenge to the adventurer before the golden age of achievement in the air. Yet however romantic, however daring, however ecstatic in its risk and speed and novelty, flight has never had to the same extent the zest, the sweet agony of suspense that was so inseparable from quests into the unknown regions of ice and snow.

Rear-Admiral Robert Edward Peary, of the United States had conquered the North Pole. Britain's Sir Ernest Shackleton had ventured nearest to the South, leaving for Amundsen and Scott the last secret polar corner to probe. It was an honour, a test, an ordeal. Above all it was adventure in all its naked realism.

The path to the Pole was the loneliest man could tread, ruthless in its defiance, bitter-sweet in its blessings, running through capricious moods of climate, studded with nature's riddles and conjuring tricks, a fickle lover and a tantalising temptress, mocking and blinding with sunshine, whipping with blizzard, luring the invader into smooth snow traps of bottomless crevasses.

It demanded the exertion of every quality, blunt and subtle, in the human make-up. Strength and courage and endurance were not enough. It needed scholarship and vision, patience and optimism, a genius for loyalty and friendship, tolerance and obedience and self-sacrifice. All these diverse things counted, and counted vitally, among those men whose names will gleam for ever in proud reflection from the white radiance of the Antarctic.

Cold and plebian must be the emotions of any who are not stirred to awe and wonder by the vision of those marvellous men

plodding and stumbling towards the elusive Pole, dead to the 2,000,000,000 human units left behind in the outer world. Fantastically alone were they in a region that is sometimes so smooth and still and ethereal that the sound of a voice is profane, sometimes in such temper and distress that it becomes the very voice of the devil.

The Antarctic is the only polar *continent*, with no water except for the sea, usually frozen, which girdles it. There are no lakes, and but a few frozen pools. Its only rivers, if such they can be called, are the little glacial streams which glide and glisten in the summer-time. Antarctica has no trees or flowers, no soil worth the cultivating. There are no living races of people there, and no land animals. Never yet has it known a woman.

The air there is the purest in the world, almost germless. In the summer the Antarctic sun shines with great splendour, but never attaining to any great height it casts long shadows that lie in kaleidoscopic patches of purple on the icescape, a twilight tint that serves to glorify nature's massive sculpturing. On a clear day visibility extends sometimes to a distance of three hundred miles.

Sound carries as though on the wings of magic. The breathing of whales has been heard five miles away, and the barking of dogs and the shouts of men from as far away as seven. But what a clash with this silence can be the boom of an avalanche and the hiss of the blizzard when the south is in revolt.

Dimensionally Antarctica is the most staggering of all the continents. Europe and Australia could be swallowed in their entirety, almost, by its 5,500,000 square miles. It towers skyward in unexcelled majesty. The average height of Asia, most elevated of all the continents proper, is three thousand two hundred feet. Europe is a petty nine hundred and forty. The main height of Antarctica is between six thousand and seven thousand feet. Scott once travelled there for one hundred and fifty miles without being once below a height of nearly nine thousand feet.

It was in this strange new world, then, that the classic drama was played out between Amundsen and Scott.

From time to time Amundsen has been criticized and belittled for what has been called his "unsportsmanship." Such attacks have been based on the fact that when Scott was preparing to go south in the first place, Amundsen's objective had been the North Pole. But when news of Peary's triumph came through he changed his mind and his plans.

But why not? The South Pole was, as the North had been,

anybody's prize. Such progress had been made with fitting out his expedition that it would have been absurd to have abandoned a polar effort. Equally would it have been depressing to have attacked the North Pole again so soon after Peary's success. So far as that goal was concerned the glitter had gone off the ice! In the circumstances the lure of the south could not be denied. And it was to his credit that he acquainted Captain Scott of his intentions by telegram.

Was it really a race to the Pole? Those who love adventure, those who crave drama, delight in thinking it was; see visions and dream dreams of the rival explorers straining neck and neck across the white desert of the Antarctic, flying from the sledges the rival flags of Britain and Norway. It is a fascinating and colourful picture, but its glamour must be subdued in the light of the real facts.

In the first place Amundsen had no intention whatever of encroaching on the route to the Pole decided upon by Scott. In the second Scott was in complete ignorance of the path plotted by the Norwegian and could not, therefore, have matched himself against him in the same direction even if he had wished. Again, there is evidence that Scott had declared that the main object of his expedition was scientific. Amundsen for his part made no secret of the fact that his was purely and simply a dash to the Pole.

Yet the elements of a race were there just the same. When, at his base, Scott learned from one of his prospecting parties that the Norwegians had jockeyed themselves into a much more favourable position for the start, his disappointment was bitter, but his reaction and his behaviour commendable. "There is now no doubt that Amundsen's plan is a very serious menace to ours," he wrote at the time. "One thing fixes itself upon my mind. The proper, as well as the wiser, course for us is to proceed exactly as though this had not happened. To go forward and do the best we can for the honour of the country without fear or panic."

But he had not entirely lost hope. When only twenty-seven miles from the Pole he wrote in his diary: "It ought to be a certain thing now, and the only appalling possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag forestalling ours." Even when, near that desolate spot, he saw dog-tracks he forced a wry smile, hoping that perhaps at the eleventh hour he could still be the first to locate the Pole's exact position with his more adequate instruments.

Scott was a grand man at times like this. Well did his second-in-command, Lieut. Evans (now Admiral Edward E. R. G. Evans,

of *Broke* fame) say of him after he was gone: "Certainly no living man could have taken Scott's place effectively as leader of our expedition—there was none other like him. He was the Heart, Brain and Master."

But he was badly handicapped so far as the race was concerned. Amundsen's plan, worked out in detail before he left Norway, was almost a perfect one. He actually predicted successfully the very day on which he would return from the Pole to his depôt ship, the *Fram*. He had picked as his men only the most experienced dog-drivers, ski-runners and ice-craftsmen. Not a hang did he care on this occasion for the niceties of scientific examination. Indeed, from that point of view his pioneer achievement was comparatively worthless. Yet though it has since been pulled callously to pieces by certain of the experts it does not detract one iota from his courage as an adventurer, his skill as an explorer or his genius as an organizer. What is more, there were other explorers to follow him, but only one South Pole to be won for Norway.

In two vital directions he was the master of Scott. His base at the Bay of Whales gave him a tactical advantage over the Englishmen at Cape Evans a long way down the coast. For one thing it nipped something like one hundred miles off the actual journey to the Pole. It was a known danger spot, one that Shackleton had shunned, but Amundsen took the risk. In latter years he confessed that if Shackleton had not decided that there was no fixed ice on there on which to build his hut he, and not Amundsen, would have been first at the Pole. His second brilliant advantage was his unerring belief in dog-transit for the dash to the objective. Scott, on the other hand, had faith in a combination of ponies, dogs and foot-slogging along pulling their own sledges.

The long months of waiting and preparation are no part of this story of adventure. So, with Amundsen from the *Fram* in the Bay of Whales, and with Scott from the *Terra Nova* at Cape Evans, we leave for the south—for the Pole.

Amundsen's team, which left on the great adventure on October 19, 1911, consisted of five men only—himself, Bjaaland, Wisting, Hassel and Hansen. They had fifty-two dogs, so strong and eager that the men either rode mounted on the sledges or were dragged for four hundred miles across the Ross Ice Shelf.

By November 10 they had reached the foot of the outlet glacier, by the 12th they were in the unknown region which they christened charmingly Carmen Land. Then over the great plateau they drove their way towards the Pole, sometimes making marches of as many

as twenty miles a day. By December 14 their objective had been accomplished.

Compared with the sufferings, difficulties and disappointments which beset Scott and his men on their outward journey, Amundsen's had been an easy one. But *easy* is not the word, for their path had been plugged with thrills and perils. The five covered themselves in glory by their resolution and stamina.

They marched in blizzards that whipped them to the point of pain. They were blinded by showers of snow, lost in fog. So fearsome was one wild stretch of country that they called it Hell's Gate. Sometimes it seemed as if they were trapped in a maze of crevasses, with chasms below, sheer mountain-sides above. Avalanches crashed down in slow and sinister threat. Continually they were forced to leave the sledges and reconnoitre ahead, roped together in the fashion of climbers in the more docile alps of the Europe which was now so distant and unreal.

But the performance of the dogs when the path was clear and smooth was remarkable. At times, pulling a heavy load, they achieved a speed of over six miles an hour. For most of them the reward for their services was death. One by one they were slaughtered on the trail; only eighteen reached the Pole.

What of that dramatic December 14? It was fine but dull. The sun did not shine often to welcome them, yet the blizzard did not rise to sneer rebuke. By early afternoon they realized that they were near their cherished goal. They spoke little, bottling up their emotions within them, though the excitement and pride that was justifiably theirs shone in every pair of eyes. Even the dogs, it seemed, put their noses in the air and sniffed southward. Hansen, who had been sent ahead to spy out the way, craned his neck to breaking point. All he could see was the endless plain stretching monotonously ahead.

"Halt!"

At three o'clock a shout of jubilation signalled that the triumph was Norway's. The sledge-meters were examined. All of them showed the full distance. By their reckoning they had reached the Pole. With the time and instruments at their disposal none of them could swear that they stood on the very spot, certain and absolute, but they planned that later they would make a "circle" around the spot of twelve-and-a-half miles to justify their claim.

Of that vivid and incomparable moment Amundsen said afterwards: "I cannot say—though I know it would sound much more effective—that the object of my life was attained. That would



be romancing too barefacedly. I had better be honest and admit straight out that I have never known any man to be placed in such a diametrically opposite position to the goal of his desires as I was at that moment. The regions around the North Pole—well, yes, the North Pole itself—had attracted me from childhood, and here I was at the South Pole. Can anything more topsy-turvy be imagined?"

But not for long was Amundsen swayed by his abstractions. Round him clustered his comrades in the great adventure. There, in the Antarctic half-light, five pairs of strong hands were knitted together in congratulation. Each blessed and thanked the other. Then Amundsen insisted that the same hands, each firm upon the slender mast, should together plant the Norwegian flag.

In silence, eyes shining the only salute, they stood there until the voice of their leader broke the spell: "Thus we plant thee, beloved flag, at the South Pole, and give to the plain on which it flies the name of King Haakon VII's Plateau."

The ceremony was over. There was work to be done, the tent to be erected, a meal to be prepared, observations taken. Sentence of death had to be carried out on Helge, one of the most faithful and untiring of the dogs, now worn out by toil and exposure. Dog *does* eat dog, and poor Helge was apportioned on the spot. Amundsen records that at the end of two hours there was nothing left of him but his teeth and the tuft at the end of his tail.

In the tent that night there was a celebration dinner, the star attraction on the menu—seal meat! Amundsen gasped when Wisting, as delighted as a child surprising his father with a gift on his birthday, offered the leader a few plugs of tobacco which he had kept hidden for the occasion in his kit-bag. A thrilled and grateful Amundsen lighted up, and the tent was filled for the first time for weeks with the fragrance of man's abiding solace, even on top of the world.

Excitedly they marked everything on which they could lay their hands with the magic words, "South Pole, 1911." Wisting, who was adept at carving, worked merrily away until the knife dropped from his tired fingers. Finally, the five intrepid men, in a haze of weariness and tobacco smoke, fell asleep to the lullaby of the Norwegian flag flapping outside in the breeze of a polar night.

Now lay ahead the task of taking more meticulous observations. Their position had to be "encircled," a duty which was accomplished by Wisting, Hassel and Bjaaland going out in three

directions, two at right angles to the course they had been taking and one further along that course. Actually, to have made a circular journey of the desired twelve-and-a-half miles would have taken days. For all that mattered, thought Amundsen and rightly so, the result was the same.

Strangely casual on such an errand, carrying little black flags that would identify them at a distance, the three set out after sharing "iron" rations of thirty biscuits. They had no compasses. If the weather had changed suddenly, if driving snow had blotted out all sign of the camp, blotted out their tracks or blinded and confused them, then they would surely have perished. But they had more than their share of pluck and faith and optimism. Luck and the weather both held for them. Their separate adventures almost simultaneously completed, they returned to camp as cheerfully and casually as they had left it.

On the night of December 17, all observations having been completed and Amundsen now satisfied that the South Pole was well and truly his, there was another celebration dinner to commemorate the discovery of the spot which the Norwegians had christened Polheim. This time Bjaaland marked the occasion with an action which, at such a place as the South Pole, was tantamount to a conjuring trick. He offered round a case of cigars! What is more, he made a speech.

Now came the time for departure. Several photographs were taken. Then carefully they erected a drab little tent which they had carried for emergencies. Inside a little black bag Amundsen placed letters for the King of Norway, in case disaster should overtake them on the return journey, and for Captain Scott, whom he confidently expected would be the next man to reach the pole. Also inside the tent he placed a sextant with a glass horizon, a hypsometer case, three reindeer skin foot-bags and some kamiks and mitts.

The letter to Scott read: "Dear Captain Scott.—As you probably are the first to reach this area after us, I will ask you kindly to forward this letter to King Haakon VII. If you can use any of the articles left in the tent, please do so. The sledge left outside might be of use to you. With kind regards. I wish you a safe return. Yours truly,—Roald Amundsen."

One by one the Norwegians signed their names on a tablet fastened to the tent-pole. Above the tent that was to be so tragic a host to Scott on his eventual arrival they raised firmly the flag of their country. Then, after standing bareheaded for an interval.

they turned away silently back again towards the coast. By January 6 they were back on the Ross Ice Shelf. By the 25th, as Amundsen had predicted to a day, they had reached the *Fram*. Their journey of one thousand eight hundred and sixty miles had taken ninety-nine days. In just over three months they had changed the world.

On January 17, 1912, Scott and his men discovered the little flag-decked tent left behind at Polheim by the Norwegians. They took their defeat well, were just a little stunned and self-conscious and ashamed, but they were in no mood to assess blame or reason for their failure.

Nor had they any reason to hang their heads. They, too, had reached the goal. If they had lost the greater glory they shared the honour. A foreign flag flew over the South Pole, the crystal jewel they had fought to set in the Crown of Empire, but it was destined that their names should endure in the empire's story for ever. Those names are: Captain Robert Falcon Scott, C.V.O., R.N., Edwin Adrian Wilson, the chief of the scientific staff, Captain Lawrence E. G. Oates, 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, Lieut. Henry R. Bowers, R.I.M., and Petty Officer Edgar Evans, R.N.

Scott and his men had left Cape Evans on November 3, 1911, having unknowingly conceded Amundsen a start that was in addition to the rival's shorter route. From almost the very first ill-luck attended them. The motor sledges broke down and were abandoned. The ponies sickened and were shot. When only twelve miles from the glacier a raging blizzard kept them imprisoned in their tents for days. This camp Scott called the "Slough of Despond." It was one of the few occasions on which he gave way to nerves.

On January 3, 1912, Scott finally selected his party for the assault on the pole. Bitterly disappointed were those who were sent back. One of them wept openly. He was heart-broken to think that he was being turned away within one hundred and forty-five miles of the objective.

So that in the end only the five whose names are given above stood beside Amundsen's tent at Polheim, while Amundsen himself was within seven days of his base and safety. Honourably they acknowledged the Norwegian flag. Scott collected the letters that had been left for him, and in their place he put a note confirming Amundsen's claim. Near the tent they built a cairn and raised the little silken Union Jack which they had carried with them from England. With a string attached to the shutter

of their camera they photographed themselves, haggard, jaded, defeated in the race, but proud of their disillusionment.

In secret confession to his diary at this time Scott wrote these bitter words: "Well, we have turned our back now on the goal of our ambitions, and must face our eight hundred miles of solid dragging—and good-bye to most of the day-dreams." *The goal of our ambitions!* No question here but that there had been a race, that Scott's dream had been to beat the Norwegian to the pole.

What a tragic cavalcade was the return journey. Blizzard succeeded blizzard. Petty Officer Evans was a frost-bite victim. Wilson suffered from snow-blindness, Oates could scarcely endure the cold, Bowers had strained a muscle. Only by a narrow margin had Scott escaped death when he crashed into a crevasse. On the night of February 17, Evans died in camp from concussion caused by a similar fall.

Gallantly the four survivors struggled on, but poor Oates could scarcely make even the limping pace of his companions. He knew that he was a drag on them, that if he held them back further death might be the result for them all. In that knowledge he resolved to sacrifice himself. Opening the tent one morning he said casually, "I am just going outside and may be some time." The others knew that they would never see him again. "He was a brave soul," wrote Scott.

Not much farther were Scott and Wilson and Bowers able to march. Within eleven miles on One Ton Depot they were imprisoned in their tent by the swirling drift of the blizzard. One by one they died. When their bodies were recovered only a few scraps of food were found and no fuel. Scott had evidently been the last to go. Beside him were letters and his journals. In one he had written: "Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of hardihood, endurance and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale——"

Now the rival Amundsen also sleeps among the snows. In 1928, volunteering to search for General Nobile, whose airship was wrecked on a return flight from the North Pole, Amundsen took off from Spitsbergen and was never heard of again. His name has passed with Scott's into history.

# THE MAN WHO MARCHED WITH DEATH

*By*  
RICHARD HUSON

THE year is 1843 and the scene is a beautiful valley some eight hundred miles north-east of Cape Town. As is often the case in tropical countries, however, the quiet luxuriant beauty of the surroundings hides an ugliness that endangers human life. This beautiful valley has become infested with lions. Nightly raids on cattle pens have taken place, and now, becoming bolder, the marauders have dared to attack in broad daylight.

The natives, not overblessed with courage, go in deadly fear that they, too, may soon fall victims to the tearing claws. Half-heartedly they have sallied out against their enemies, but before the terror they have flinched and the beasts have escaped. The days are dark with forebodings—the mask of beauty has been ruthlessly torn away from the smiling countryside.

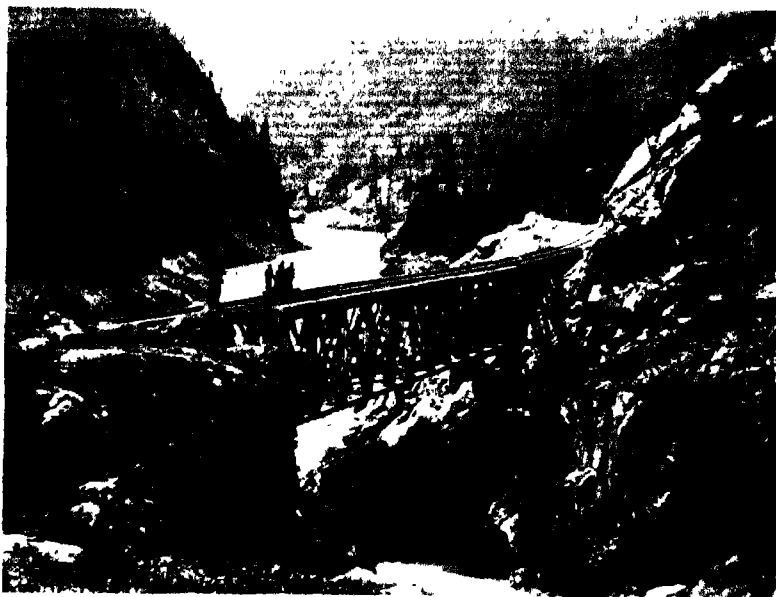
Then, into the valley of fear, accompanied by his band of native followers, marches the white man—the strange being with the straight hair, so different from their own crinkly, woolly crops—he whom they know as “the white man who does not make slaves.” The villagers flock to him for help. What shall they do to drive the lions away?

The white man explains that if they kill one lion the others may take the hint and leave the neighbourhood. The next time the pens are attacked he will go with them, to lead them.

The alarm is given and the party, headed by the white man, sets out to track the lions. They are found at last on a small tree-covered hill, and a circle of men gradually closes in on them. Suddenly the white man sees a lion crouching on a rock, but, before he can fire, one of his native companions has done so. The bullet smacks against the rock, and the lion, after biting at the place struck, as a dog will do when a stone is thrown at him, leaps from his perch and breaks through the circle of men. The natives, either through fear of witchcraft, or through fear of their lives, scatter before him.

Two other lions are spotted, but the white man dares not fire

CONQUERORS OF THE GREAT CANADIAN DIVIDE



TRIUMPH AT LAST

*(Top) The new line, as yet unopened, crosses the Fraser River at China Bar Bluff. (Bottom) Mr. D. A. Smith, Assistant Managing Director of the C.P.R., drives home the last spike.*

## THE RACE TO THE POLE



ALL HONOUR TO AMUNDSEN

*(Top) Scott and his men standing round the tent Amundsen left.  
(Bottom) Scott in winter quarters writing up his journal.*

lest he should injure the natives, so they, too, are allowed to escape. Then, just as they are making their way back to the village, the hunter sees yet another lion—it, also, is crouching on a rock, half hidden by bush, about thirty yards away.

He fires both barrels of his gun and the natives cry: "He is shot, he is shot!" But the white man says: "Stop a little till I load again," and walks slowly towards the rock.

Just as he is in the act of ramming down the bullets he hears a shout. Looking up, he sees the lion about to spring upon him. The next moment he is rolling on the ground, the lion shaking him as a terrier does a rat. The lion's jaws crunch over his arm, but the white man feels neither pain nor terror; he experiences only a kind of dreaminess, although perfectly conscious of all that is happening.

He struggles over on to his side to relieve himself of the weight, for the lion has one paw on the back of his head. Then he sees that the lion is looking in the direction of his native companion. The native is about to fire from a distance of about ten or fifteen yards.

The gun, an old flint-lock, misses fire in both barrels—but the white man's life is saved. The lion releases him and attacks the new danger, and then the bullets that have entered his body at last take effect, and he falls to the ground dead.

David Livingstone, the intrepid explorer and missionary, was one of the few men who underwent such a terrible experience and lived to tell the tale. He made light of it to his friends, but he bore the marks of the struggle to the end of his days, and his arm never regained its full usefulness. His life was crowded with such escapes from death.

Dr. Livingstone's name will always rank high in the list of noble adventurers. He adventured in the cause of humanity, science, progress—not for any desire of personal gain. Modesty and simplicity marked his life, and through the privations which he cheerfully endured he brought light into the darkest places of the Dark Continent. No other explorer has ever done so much in mapping the unexplored tracts of Africa; whenever a map of the Third Continent is unrolled, his memorial lies before us. He struggled against the bitterest odds, uncomplaining; putting implicit faith in Providence—and so he continued until the dark days of his last journey, on his third visit to Africa, when, fever-stricken, starved, and deserted save for a mere handful of faithful  
o



followers, he pressed onwards to the goal he was destined never to reach—the sources of the Nile.

When Livingstone set out on his last journey he was fifty-three years of age. Already to his credit he had the discoveries of the Victoria Falls and Lake Nyasa, but his life's ambition was to find the mysterious birthplace of ancient Egypt's sacred river. Then only would he lay down his work. But it was not for exploration alone, however, that he was about to plunge once again into the dark heart of Africa—there was another reason, and one which lay close to his soul throughout all his journeys: the suppression of the slave trade, the bringing of enlightenment.

A few days after leaving Zanzibar, he recorded in his journal, which he kept faithfully from day to day, the following words:

“Now that I am on the point of starting on another trip into Africa, I feel quite exhilarated: when one travels with the specific object in view of ameliorating the condition of the natives, every act becomes ennobled. Whether exchanging the customary civilities, or arriving at a village, accepting a night's lodging, purchasing food for the party, or answering polite African enquiries as to our objects in travelling, we begin to spread a knowledge of that people by whose agency their land will yet become enlightened and freed from the slave trade.”

No European went with him on this trip. His party consisted of thirty-six black men, including some sepoy.

Almost as soon as he started, his troubles began. The sepoys turned out to be lazy, incorrigible fellows. They spread disaffection among the bearers, treated the pack animals brutally and did everything in their power to hinder the march. And progress was not easy. Dense jungles, through which it was almost impossible to cut a path, blocked the way. The heavy air was laden with fever—one after the other the natives fell sick. The animals also were not immune from disease; the dreaded tsetse fly took toll of them.

Three months after leaving Zanzibar, Livingstone entered a country which displayed terrible evidence of the Arab slave trade. They passed a native woman tied by the neck to a tree. She was dead. The local people explained that she had been unable to keep pace with the rest of the unfortunate slaves, so her master left her there, tying her securely so that if she recovered after resting she should not become the property of another. Other dead slaves, secured in a like manner, were encountered, and they stumbled across the body of one who lay in a pool of blood

—stabbed or shot to death. The Arabs believed in making examples—"to encourage the others."

The little band now began to experience yet another trial—lack of food; for the country through which they were passing was sadly depopulated. In his journal, Livingstone wrote:

"Nothing to interest but the same weary trudge; our food so scarce that we can only give a handful or half a pound of grain to each person per day. . . . A dead body lay in a hut by the way-side; the poor thing had begun to make a garden by the stream, probably in hopes of living long enough (two months or so) on wild fruits to reap a crop of maize."

The spectre of starvation threw its gaunt shadow over the entire neighbourhood.

The trouble with the sepoys now came to a head. In Livingstone's own words: "If I cannot get rid of them we shall all starve before we accomplish what we wish." They dragged behind, picking up wild fruits, and over one march, which the others did in eight days, they took from fourteen to twenty-two. They had killed a donkey by overloading and beating it, and killed and eaten one of the transport buffaloes. Inveterate liars, the sepoys explained that the buffalo had died and that tigers had devoured it. They had seen them. "Did you see the stripes of the tiger?" Livingstone asked. Yes—all had seen the stripes distinctly. Then Livingstone knew they were lying—there is no striped tiger in all Africa!

The majority of the sepoys were paid off, each man receiving eighteen yards of calico, and were told to travel back to the coast with an Arab trader's caravan which was expected shortly. And then the depleted expedition pressed on again.

After travelling for another three weeks Livingstone reached the shores of Lake Nyasa, which he had discovered on a previous exploration. He wrote:

"It was as if I had come back to an old home I never again expected to see, and pleasant to bathe in the delicious waters again, hear the roar of the sea, and dash in the rollers. . . . I feel quite exhilarated."

But the feeling of exhilaration was not to last long—there were other troubles ahead.

When the expedition crossed over to the western side of the lake and turned in a northerly direction, Livingstone discovered that some of the natives were plundering the loads which they carried. He reprimanded them, but to no purpose.

Then, one morning when the party was about to set out on the day's march, the light-fingered natives left their goods on the ground and decamped. Livingstone was not sorry to see them go, "for though my party is now inconveniently small," he wrote, "I could not trust them with flints in their guns, nor allow them to remain behind, for their object was invariably to plunder their loads."

By December 11, they were traversing forest country and experiencing various delays on account of the heavy rains. The game-paths, by which they travelled, were running with water and the rivers through which they had to wade were swollen. Progress was necessarily slow. There was also food shortage to face again. Although game was shot once in a while, there was not a sufficiency of it. And they could not expect to buy food in the villages through which they passed; the villagers themselves were on the point of starvation.

New Year's Day slipped by, and the explorer wrote in his journal:

"Bought a *senzé*, a rat-looking animal; but I was glad to get anything in the shape of meat."

And the next day he recorded something which, in the light of after events, proved to be prophetic:

"I feel always hungry, and am constantly dreaming of better food when I should be sleeping. Savoury viands of former times come vividly up before the imagination, even in my waking hours; this is rather odd as I am not a dreamer; indeed, I scarcely dream but when I am going to be ill or actually so."

Hunger, exposure to the penetrating rains, and the soakings occasioned by constant fording of rivers were gradually undermining his strength.

Then the blow fell which, without doubt, was indirectly the cause of Livingstone's death. His medicine chest was stolen. No longer was it possible for him to take precautions against the dreaded fever. The entire stock of quinine had gone—a substance which, in the circumstances, was more precious to him than all the gold in the world. The loss of tools and guns he could bear. "I felt as if I had now received the sentence of death," he confided to his journal.

The sufferings from hunger became acute. Already he had been forced to take his belt in three holes. Towards the end of January he became alarmed at his condition—he was so emaciated.

Not once, however, did the thought of abandoning his project cross his mind. He must push on. His time had not yet come. A course was set for Lake Tanganyika. At some of the villages he was received with open arms—at others with hostility. He took the rough with the smooth. He trusted implicitly in Providence.

On March 10 he wrote :

"I have been ill of fever ever since we left Moamba's; every step I take jars in the chest, and I am very weak; I can scarcely keep up the march . . . I have a constant singing in the ears, and can scarcely hear the loud tick of the chronometers."

At the beginning of April his condition became serious. He had a fit of insensibility, "Which," he said, "shows the power of fever without medicine." He could not get into his hut. He fell down and struck his head heavily.

It seems incredible that a man could carry on under such desperate conditions. But Livingstone did so—not only for a matter of weeks, but for long, dreary months. Harassed by hostile tribes, racked with fever, tormented by hunger, it was only his indomitable spirit that kept him going. And as the months lengthened into years his constant prayer was that he might be granted enough endurance to complete his work. He had given up all hope of ever seeing civilization again. He had no possible means of communicating with the outer world. He was alone—buried alive in the heart of Africa.

By 1869 he had arrived at Ujiji, on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, and had added Lake Mweru to his list of discoveries.

In Ujiji he spent some time, endeavouring to recuperate, for dysentery, an old complaint of his, had begun to attack him. In 1871 he crossed Lake Tanganyika and struck out for the Lualaba River, believing it to be the upper part of the Nile, although, in reality, it was part of the River Congo. At a settlement called Nyangwe he stayed four months. Here he witnessed some of the worst horrors of the slave trade he had ever encountered. His accounts of what he saw were graphically entered in his journal, and it was largely owing to these, when published later in England, that public opinion was roused and determined efforts were made to stop the callous traffic in human life.

Another blow to his already much weakened constitution had been dealt by an attack of pneumonia, which affected his right lung; disaffection was rife among his bearers again, and the slave traders

were rousing neighbouring tribes into open hostility. Livingstone regretfully decided that he must turn back to Ujiji, gather new followers and rest for awhile.

The march back was fraught with dangers. Illness was his constant companion.

Seventeen days after leaving the comparative safety of Nyangwe he recorded in his journal:

*August 7.*—To a village, ill and almost every step in pain. The people all ran away, and appeared in the distance armed, and refused to come near—then came and threw stones at us, and afterwards tried to kill those who went for water. We sleep uncomfortably, the natives watching us all round.

The next day they ran into an ambush. In the dense forest through which they were passing a barricade of tree-trunks had been thrown across their path. A large spear, flung by an unseen hand, grazed Livingstone's back and stuck quivering in the ground. The red jacket which the explorer was wearing provided an easy target. Another spear was flung. It passed a foot in front of him. Guns were fired into the mass of forest, but the answering jeers of the hidden assailants proved that the shots had had no effect. Two men in the party were killed before the barricade was negotiated.

Arriving at a part of the forest cleared for cultivation, Livingstone noticed a gigantic tree on an ant-hill. The base of the tree had been fired. Suddenly the huge trunk swayed and toppled over. Livingstone jumped back just in time. Three times that day death had almost claimed him.

But they were not out of danger yet. For five long hours they had to run a murderous gauntlet, waylaid on every side by bloodthirsty spearmen.

As they marched on, Livingstone's sufferings from dysentery became more and more acute. Frequently halts, sometimes lasting a day, had to be called, so that he might regain his strength.

When at last they completed the three hundred and fifty miles journey to Ujiji, some three months had elapsed from the time of setting out from Nyangwe.

Livingstone was feeling very despondent and, on his arrival, another disappointment greeted him. The barter goods which he had left in charge of an Arab had been unscrupulously sold. It was nothing short of theft. Livingstone was faced with the dismal project of having to wait, almost in beggary, until a messenger could be got through to the coast and return with a

fresh supply of goods and bearers. He had not the wherewithal to purchase food or labour. His plight was desperate, but it was the inevitable period of inactivity that caused him the greatest concern. He seemed to sense the fact that he had not very much longer to live. The sands of life were rapidly running away. Each moment was precious if he was to accomplish what he had set out to do.

Then, when his spirits were at their lowest ebb, something happened which to Livingstone must have seemed a miracle. Indeed, it was a miracle.

One morning his native boy Susi dashed up to him and gasped out breathlessly, "An Englishman! I see him!"

A white man in Ujiji? Livingstone shook his head, unbelievably. But it was true. A well-equipped caravan came into sight, a native bearing the Stars and Stripes of America marching at its head. The white man was H. M. Stanley, special correspondent of the *New York Herald*.

For five years no definite news of Livingstone had penetrated to the outer world. He had been swallowed up by the African jungles. Was he dead or alive? Now and again rumours had filtered through to the coast that he was dead—rumours spread by some of his deserting followers to explain their cowardly conduct. The whole of the civilized globe waited anxiously. Had the explorer indeed passed on to the Great Beyond?

As time went on the idea that he had perished gained strength. Newspapers in Britain published obituary notices, eulogizing his splendid work. But the proprietor of the *New York Herald* was not convinced. He determined to know the truth, one way or the other. So Stanley was dispatched with orders, as Livingstone put it, "to obtain accurate information about Dr. Livingstone if living, and if dead to bring home my bones."

The meeting between the two men is historic. Though pregnant with drama—and what situation *could* be more dramatic?—it will always be remembered because of its simplicity, its restraint—both keynotes of Livingstone's character.

Livingstone rose from the seat outside his hut and walked towards Stanley with outstretched hand.

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" Stanley asked.

"Yes," said the explorer, simply.

With the coming of Stanley new hope entered Livingstone's heart. He could now push on once more towards his objective. Barter goods and fresh supplies were ready to his hand.

Stanley, who could see that Livingstone was a very sick man, begged and pleaded with him to return to civilization. But the explorer was adamant. He was not to be swerved from his purpose. So, after spending four months with him, Stanley regretfully took his leave and made his way to the coast, bearing with him Livingstone's records of his expedition.

The news Stanley flashed to America of his discovery of the lost explorer sent a thrill of happiness round the world—but that happiness was destined to be short-lived.

The parting must have been a very bitter one for the man left behind. With the last handshake he had said good-bye to those of his own race whom he loved and cherished—his friends and his children. Loneliness closed round him once again—a loneliness which enshrouded him until the day of his death.

After five months of weary waiting, the band of fifty-seven natives sent back by Stanley from the coast arrived. Livingstone was now ready to march again.

He turned southwards, skirted the shores of Lake Tanganyika and, though frequently held up by bouts of fever and dysentery, by the end of the year—1872—he had reached the Lofubu River and was nearing Lake Bangweulu. The country there was networked with marshes which, in that season—the rainy season—were transformed into treacherous lakes. Progress would have been difficult enough in dry weather; as it was, the party was taxed almost to the limit of their endurance.

To add to their burdens most of the guides to whom, from time to time, they were forced to entrust themselves, turned out to be completely unreliable. They were led miles out of their way, and directed into swampy country that was almost impassable. Native chiefs, too, could not be relied upon. They continually promised food and transport—canoes to cross deep rivers—and then withheld them.

Soon Livingstone became so weak that he dared not expose himself to the rigours of crossing swamps and rivulets on foot. He was still suffering from dysentery. So his servants carried him across on their shoulders, with the waters sometimes reaching to their mouths.

In Livingstone's own words:

"It is impossible to describe the amount of water near the lake. Rivulets without number. They are so deep as to damp all ardour."

There is no doubt that the explorer saw the danger in the

constant recurrences of his old complaint. He knew his strength was fast ebbing away. On February 14 he unburdened himself thus in his journal:

"If the good Lord gives me favour, and permits me to finish my work, I shall thank and bless Him, though it has cost me untold toil, pain, and travel; this trip has made my hair all grey."

The next month was a nightmare of worry. Rivulets, swamps and deep rivers barred their progress in unending succession. Long halts were made while negotiations were carried on for canoes. And Livingstone had often to resort to strategy, otherwise the native chiefs to whom he appealed for transport would have turned deaf ears and left him to rot in the marshlands.

By April 21 Livingstone was so weak that he found it impossible to continue. So on the twenty-second his servants constructed a litter, covered the framework with grass, laid a blanket on it, and lifted thereon the pain-racked body of the dying man. That day they marched for two and a quarter hours—it was as much as Livingstone could endure.

On April 23 they set out again, bearing their burden as gently as possible, through flooded treeless wastes. After the lapse of only an hour and a half, however, they were compelled to halt again. The next day's march was even shorter—one hour. And so, by such painfully slow stages, the little party gradually moved on.

On April 27 Livingstone made his last entry in his journal:

"Knocked up quite, and remain—recover—sent to buy milk goats. We are on the banks of the Molilamo."

The native chief, in whose district they were, did all in his power to assist the stricken white man. He put canoes at his disposal. Livingstone wanted to cross the river to reach Ilala, Chitambo's village.

That last journey must have seared him to the soul. Each movement, however slight, increased his mortal agony. Frequent rests were necessary. He could not speak for faintness.

While his servants were constructing a hut for him in the village, he was placed in a shady spot on the outskirts. Soon he was surrounded by a respectful crowd of natives who stood in wonder, gazing on the still form of "the white man who does not make slaves." Drizzling showers began to fall.

At last the hut was ready. Tenderly they placed him on his bed, his medicine chest close at hand, and lit a fire outside the



door. A native boy slept on the threshold, ready to attend if he called.

The next day, April 30, Chitambo arrived to pay his respects, but the explorer was too weak to talk to him. He asked him to go away and return on the morrow.

The hours stole on until, just before midnight, Livingstone sent for Susi. He requested that his medicine chest should be handed to him. He selected some calomel and placed it by his side.

"All right; you can go out now," he breathed feebly.

Those were the last words that fell from his lips.

About 4 a.m. the native boy rushed to Susi. "Come to Bwana; I am afraid. I don't know if he is alive," he said.

Arousing four of the other men, they went, with fear in their hearts, and looked into the hut. There, by the flickering light of a candle, they saw their beloved master kneeling by his bed, as if in prayer. He was dead. The weary explorer had set out on his last and most mysterious journey of all.

Some ten months later into Bagamoyo, a coast town opposite Zanzibar, there trudged a tragic little procession of five natives. Headed by Susi, the explorer's favourite servant, the sons of Africa were bringing home the body of the man who had done so much for their country. They buried his heart outside the village where he had died, for they knew that even in death he would not wish to be parted from the land which he loved and in which he had so willingly laboured. He was always to be part of Africa.

The faithful five—the others had either deserted or fallen by the way—had carried his body over seven hundred miles of jungle and wilderness, beset with many difficulties and dangers. It was their last tribute to Livingstone—but it was a tribute as noble as that paid by his sorrowing homeland when it gave him honoured burial in the resting-place of heroes—Westminster Abbey.

# MAROONED ON A DESERT ISLAND

*By*

PHILIP ASHTON

UPON Friday, June 15, 1722, after being out some time in a schooner with four men and a boy, off Cape Sable, I stood in for Port Rossaway, designing to lie there all Sunday. Having arrived about four in the afternoon, we saw, among other vessels which had reached the port before us, a brigantine supposed to be inward bound from the West Indies. After remaining three or fours hours at anchor, a boat from the brigantine came alongside, with four hands, who leaped on deck, and suddenly drawing pistols and brandishing cutlasses, demanded the surrender both of ourselves and our vessel. All remonstrance was vain, nor, indeed, had we known who they were before boarding us, could we have made any effectual resistance, being only five men and a boy, and were thus under the necessity of submitting at discretion. We were not single in misfortune, as thirteen or fourteen fishing vessels were in like manner surprised the same evening.

When carried on board the brigantine, I found myself in the hands of Ned Low, an infamous pirate, whose vessel had two great guns, four swivels, and about forty-two men. I was strongly urged to sign the articles of agreement among the pirates, and to join their number. At length, being conducted along with five of the prisoners to the quarter-deck, Low came up to us with pistols in his hands, and loudly demanded, "Are any of you married men?" This unexpected question, added to the sight of the pistols, struck us all speechless; we were alarmed lest there was some secret meaning in his words, and that he would proceed to extremities; therefore none could reply. In a violent passion he cocked a pistol, and clapping it to my head, cried out, "You dog! why don't you answer?" swearing vehemently at the same time that he would shoot me through the head. I was sufficiently terrified by his threats and fierceness; but rather than lose my life in so trifling a matter, I ventured to pronounce, as loud as I durst speak, that I was not married. Hereupon he seemed to be somewhat pacified, and turned away. It appeared that Low was resolved to take no married men whatever, which often seemed surprising to me, until I had been a considerable time with him.

But his own wife had died lately, before he became a pirate, and he had a young child at Boston, for whom he entertained such tenderness, that at every lucid interval from drinking and revelling, on mentioning it, I have seen him sit down and weep plentifully. Thus I concluded that his reason for taking only single men, was probably that they might have no ties such as wives and children to divert them from his service, and render them desirous of returning home.

The pirates finding force of no avail in compelling us to join them, began to use persuasion instead. They tried to flatter me into compliance, by setting before me the share I should have in their spoils, and the riches which I should become master of, and all the time eagerly importuned me to drink along with them. But I still continued to resist their proposals; whereupon Low, with equal fury as before, threatened to shoot me through the head; and though I earnestly entreated my release, he and his people wrote my name and that of my companions in their books.

On June 19, the pirates changed the *Privateer*, as they called their vessel, and went into a new schooner belonging to Marblehead, which they had captured. They then put all the prisoners whom they designed sending home, on board of the brigantine, and sent her to Boston; this induced me to make another unsuccessful attempt for liberty; but though I fell on my knees before Low, he refused to let me go. Thus I saw the brigantine depart with all the captives, excepting myself and seven more. A short time before she departed I had nearly effected my escape; for a dog belonging to Low being accidentally left on shore, he ordered some hands into a boat to bring it off. Thereupon two young men, captives, both belonging to Marblehead, readily leaped into the boat; and I, considering that if I could once get on shore, means might be found of effecting my escape, endeavoured to go along with them. But the quarter-master, called Russel, catching hold of my shoulder, drew me back. As the young men did not return, he thought I was privy to their plot; and with the most outrageous oaths, snapped his pistol at me on my denying all knowledge of it. The pistol missing fire, however, only served to enrage him the more: he snapped it three times again, and as often it missed fire; on which he held it overboard, and then it went off. Russel on this drew his cutlass, and was about to attack me in the utmost fury, when I leaped down into the hold, and saved myself.

Off St. Michael's the pirates took a large Portuguese pink, laden with wheat, coming out of the road; and being a good sailer,

and carrying fourteen guns, transferred their company into her. It afterwards became necessary to careen her, whence they made three islands, called the Triangles, lying about forty leagues to the eastward of Surinam. In heaving down the pink, Low had ordered so many men to the shrouds and yards, that the ports, by her heeling, got under water, and the sea rushing in, she overset: he and the doctor were then in the cabin, and as soon as he observed the water gushing in, he leaped out of one of the stern ports, while the doctor attempted to follow him; but the violence of the sea repulsed the latter, and he was forced back into the cabin. Low, however, contrived to thrust his arm into the port, and dragging him out, saved his life. Meanwhile the vessel completely overset; her keel turned out of the water, but as the hull filled, she sank in the depth of about six fathoms. The yard-arms striking the ground, forced the masts somewhat above the water. As the ship overset, the people got from the shrouds and yards upon the hull; and as the hull went down, they again resorted to the rigging rising a little out of the sea. Being an indifferent swimmer, I was reduced to great extremity; for along with other light lads, I had been sent up to the maintop-gallant yard; and the people of a boat, who were now occupied in preserving the men, refusing to take me in, I was compelled to attempt reaching the buoy. This I luckily accomplished, and as it was large, secured myself there until the boat approached. I once more requested the people to take me in, but they still refused, as the boat was full. I was uncertain whether they designed leaving me to perish in this situation; however, the boat being deeply laden, made way very slowly, and one of my own comrades, captured at the same time with myself, calling to me to forsake the buoy and swim towards her, I assented, and reaching the boat, he drew me on board. Two men, John Bell and Zana Gourdon, were lost in the pink. Though the schooner in company was very near at hand, her people were employed mending their sails under an awning, and knew nothing of the accident until the boat full of men got alongside.

The pirates having thus lost their principal vessel, and the greatest part of their provisions and water, were reduced to great extremities for want of the latter. They were unable to get a supply at the Triangles, nor, on account of calms and currents, could they make the island of Tobago. Thus they were forced to stand for Grenada, which they reached, after being on short allowance for sixteen days together. Grenada was a French settlement; and Low on arriving, after having sent all his men

below, except a sufficient number to manœuvre the vessel, said he was from Barbadoes, that he had lost the water on board, and was obliged to put in there for a supply. The people entertained no suspicion of his being a pirate; but afterwards supposing him a smuggler, thought it a good opportunity to make a prize of his vessel. Next day, therefore, they equipped a large sloop of seventy tons and four guns, with about thirty hands, as sufficient for the capture and came alongside, while Low was quite unsuspecting of their design. But this being evidently betrayed by their number and actions, he quickly called ninety men on deck; and having eight guns mounted, the French sloop became an easy prey. Provided with these two vessels, the pirates cruised about in the West Indies, taking seven or eight prizes, and at length arrived at the island of Santa Cruz, where they captured two more. While lying there, Low thought he stood in need of a medicine chest; and in order to procure one, sent four Frenchmen in a ship he had taken to St. Thomas's, about twelve leagues distant, with money to purchase it; promising them liberty and the return of all their vessels for the service. But he declared, at the same time, if it proved otherwise, he would kill the rest of the men and burn the vessels. In little more than twenty-four hours the Frenchmen returned with the object of their mission, and Low punctually performed his promise by restoring the vessels.

Having sailed for the Spanish American settlements, the pirates descried two large ships, about half-way between Carthagena and Portobello, which proved to be the *Mermaid*, an English man-of-war, and a Guineaman. They approached in chase, but discovering the man-of-war's great range of teeth, they immediately put about and made the best of their way off. The man-of-war then commenced the pursuit and gained upon them apace: and I confess that my terrors were now equal to any that I had previously suffered; for I concluded that we should certainly be taken, and that I should no less certainly be hanged for company's sake; so true are the words of Solomon: "A companion of fools shall be destroyed." But the two pirate vessels, finding themselves out-sailed, separated; and Farrington Spriggs, who commanded the schooner in which I was, stood in for the shore. The *Mermaid* observing Low's sloop to be the larger of the two, crowded all sail, and continued gaining still more, indeed until her shot flew over the vessel; but one of the sloop's crew showed Low a shoal which he could pass, and in the pursuit the man-of-war grounded. Thus the pirates escaped hanging on this occasion. Spriggs and

one of his chosen companions, dreading the consequences of being captured and brought to justice, laid their pistols beside them in the interval, and pledging a mutual oath in a bumper of liquor, swore, if they saw no possibility of escape, to set foot to foot and blow out each other's brains. But standing towards the shore, they made Pickeroon Bay, and escaped the danger.

Next we repaired to a small island called Utila, about seven or eight leagues to leeward of the island of Roatan, in the Bay of Honduras, where the bottom of the schooner was cleaned. There were now twenty-two persons on board, and eight of us engaged in a plot to overpower our masters and make our escape. Spriggs proposed sailing for New England in quest of provisions, and to increase his company; and we intended on approaching the coast, when the rest had indulged freely in liquor, and fallen sound asleep, to secure them under the hatches, and then deliver ourselves up to government. Although our plot was carried on with all possible privacy, Spriggs had somehow or other got intelligence of it; and having fallen in with Low on the voyage, went on board his ship to make a furious declaration against us. But Low made little account of his information, otherwise it might have been fatal to most of our number. Spriggs, however, returned raging to the schooner, exclaiming that four of us should go forward and be shot; and to me in particular he said: "You dog, Ashton, you deserve to be hanged up to the yard-arm for designing to cut us off." I replied that I had no intention of injuring any man on board, but I should be glad if they would allow me to go away quietly. At length this flame was quenched, and through the goodness of God I escaped destruction.

Roatan harbour, like all about the Bay of Honduras, is full of small islands, which pass under the general name of "keys"; and having got in here, Low, with some of his chief men, landed on a small island, which they called "Port Royal Key." There they erected huts, and continued carousing, drinking, and firing, while the different vessels of which they now had possession were repairing. On Saturday, March 9, 1723, the cooper and six hands were going ashore in the long-boat for water; and coming alongside of the schooner, I requested to be of the party. The cooper hesitated; I urged that I had never hitherto been ashore, and thought it hard to be so closely confined, when every one besides had the liberty of landing when there was occasion. Low had before told me, on requesting to be sent away in some of the captured vessels which he dismissed, that I should go home when

he did, and swore that I should never previously set my foot on land. But now I considered, if I could possibly once get on *terra firma*, though in ever so bad circumstances, I should count it a happy deliverance, and resolved never to embark again. The cooper at length took me into the long-boat; Low and his chief people were on a different island from Roatan, where the watering-place lay. My only clothing was an Osnaburgh frock and trousers, a milled cap, but neither shirt, shoes, stockings, nor anything else.

When we first landed, I was very active in assisting to get the casks out of the boat, and in rolling them to the watering-place. Then, taking a hearty draught of water, I strolled along the beach, picking up stones and shells; on reaching the distance of musket-shot from the party, I began to withdraw towards the skirts of the woods. In answer to a question by the cooper, as to whither I was going, I replied: "For cocoanuts," as some cocoa trees were just before me; but as soon as I was out of sight of my companions, I took to my heels, running as fast as the thickness of the bushes and my naked feet would admit. Notwithstanding I had got a considerable way into the woods, I was still so near as to hear the voices of the party if they spoke loudly, and I therefore hid in a thicket where I knew they could not find me. After my comrades had filled their casks and were about to depart, the cooper called on me to accompany them; however, I lay snug in the thicket, and gave him no answer, though his words were plain enough. At length, after hallooing I could hear them say to one another: "The dog is lost in the woods, and cannot find the way out again"; then they hallooed once more, and cried: "He has run away, and won't come to us"; and the cooper observed that had he known my intention, he would not have brought me ashore. Satisfied of their inability to find me among the trees and bushes, the cooper at last, to show his kindness, exclaimed: "If you do not come away presently, I shall go off and leave you alone." Nothing, however, could induce me to discover myself; and my comrades, seeing it vain to wait any longer, put off without me. Thus I was left on a desolate island, destitute of all help, and remote from the track of navigators; but compared with the state and society I had quitted, I considered the wilderness hospitable, and the solitude interesting.

When I thought the whole were gone, I emerged from my thicket, and came down to a small run of water about a mile from the place where our casks were filled, and there sat down to

observe the proceedings of the pirates. To my great joy, in five days their vessels sailed, and I saw the schooner part from them to shape a different course. I then began to reflect on myself and my present condition: I was on an island which I had no means of leaving; I knew of no human being within many miles; my clothing was scanty, and it was impossible to procure a supply. I was altogether destitute of provision, nor could I tell how my life was to be supported. This melancholy prospect drew a copious flood of tears from my eyes; but as it had pleased God to grant my wishes in being liberated from those whose occupation was devising mischief against their neighbours, I resolved to account every hardship light. Yet Low would never suffer his men to work on the Sabbath, which was more devoted to play; and I have even seen some of them sit down to read in a good book. In order to ascertain how I was to live in time to come, I began to range over the island, which proved ten or eleven leagues long, and lay in about sixteen degrees thirty feet north latitude. But I soon found that my only companions would be the beasts of the earth and the fowls of the air; for there were no indications of any habitations on the island, though every now and then I found some shreds of earthenware scattered in a lime walk, said by some to be the remains of Indians formerly dwelling here.

The island was well watered, full of high hills and deep valleys. Numerous fruit trees, such as figs, vines, and cocoanuts, are found in the latter; and I found a kind larger than an orange, oval-shaped, of a brownish colour without, and red within. Though many of these had fallen under the trees, I could not venture to take them until I saw the wild hogs feeding with safety, and then I found them very delicious fruit. Stores of provisions abounded here, though I could avail myself of nothing but the fruit; for I had no knife or iron implement, either to cut up a tortoise on turning it, or weapons wherewith to kill animals; nor had I any means of making a fire to cook my capture, even if I were successful. Sometimes I entertained thoughts of digging pits, and covering them over with small branches of trees, for the purpose of taking hogs or deer; but I wanted a shovel and every substitute for the purpose, and I was soon convinced that my hands were insufficient to make a cavity deep enough to retain what should fall into it. Thus I was forced to rest satisfied with fruit, which was to be esteemed very good provision for any one in my condition. In process of time, while poking among the sand with a stick in quest of tortoises' eggs—which I had heard were laid in the sand—part of one came



up adhering to it; and on removing the sand, I found nearly a hundred and fifty, which had not lain long enough to spoil. Therefore, taking some, I ate them, and strung others on a strip of palmetto, which, being hung up in the sun, became thick and somewhat hard, so that they were more palatable. After all, they were not very savoury food; yet, having nothing but what fell from the trees, I remained contented. Tortoises lay their eggs in the sand, in holes about a foot or a foot and a half deep, and smooth the surface over them, so that there is no discovering where they lie. According to the best of my observation, the young are hatched in eighteen or twenty days, and then immediately take to the water.

Many serpents are on this and the adjacent islands; one, about twelve or fourteen feet long, is as large as a man's waist, but not poisonous. When lying at length, they look like old trunks of trees covered with short moss, though they more usually assume a circular position. The first time I saw one of these serpents, I had approached very near before discovering it to be a living creature; it opened its mouth wide enough to have received a hat, and breathed on me. A small black fly creates such annoyance that, even if a person possessed ever so many comforts, his life would be oppressive to him, unless for the possibility of retiring to some small key, destitute of wood and bushes, where multitudes are dispersed by the wind.

To this place, then, was I confined during nine months, without seeing a human being. One day after another was lingered out, I know not how, void of occupation or amusement, except collecting food, rambling from hill to hill and from island to island, and gazing on sky and water. Although my mind was occupied by many regrets, I had the reflection that I was lawfully employed when taken, so that I had no hand in bringing misery on myself; I was also comforted to think that I had the approbation and consent of my parents in going to sea; and I trusted that it would please God, in His own time and manner, to provide for my return to my father's house. Therefore I resolved to submit patiently to my misfortune. It was my daily practice to ramble from one part of the island to another, though I had a more special home near the water-side. Here I built a hut, to defend me against the heat of the sun by day and the heavy dews by night. Taking some of the best branches that I could find fallen from the trees, I contrived to fix them against a low hanging bough, by fastening them together with split palmetto leaves; next I covered the whole with some of the largest and most suitable leaves that I could get. Many

of those huts were constructed by me, generally near the beach, with the open part fronting the sea to have the better look-out, and the advantage of the sea-breeze, which both the heat and the vermin required. But the insects were so troublesome, that I thought of endeavouring to get over to some of the adjacent keys, in hopes of enjoying rest. However, I was, as already said, a very indifferent swimmer; I had no canoe, nor any means of making one. At length, having got a piece of bamboo, which is hollow like a reed, and light as a cork, I ventured, after frequent trials with it under my breast and arms, to put off for a small key about a gunshot distant, which I reached in safety.

My new place of refuge was only about three or four hundred feet in circuit, lying very low, and clear of wood and brush; from exposure to wind it was quite free of vermin, and I seemed to have got into a new world, where I lived infinitely more at ease. Hither I retired, therefore, when the heat of the day rendered the insect tribe most obnoxious; yet I was obliged to be much on Roatan, to procure food and water, and at night, on account of my hut. When swimming backward and forward between the two islands, I used to bind my frock and trousers about my head; and if I could have carried over wood and leaves whereof to make a hut with equal facility, I should have passed more of my time on the smaller one. Yet these excursions were not unattended with danger. Once I remember, when passing from the larger island, the bamboo, before I was aware, slipped from under me, and the tide or current set down so strong, that it was with great difficulty I could reach the shore. At another time, when swimming over to the small island, a shovel-nosed shark—which, as well as alligators, abound in those seas—struck me in the thigh just as my foot could reach the bottom, and grounded itself, from the shallowness of the water, as I suppose, so that its mouth could not get round towards me. The blow I felt some hours after making the shore. By repeated practice, I at length became a pretty dexterous swimmer, and amused myself by passing from one island to another among the keys.

I suffered very much from being barefoot, so many deep wounds being made in my feet from traversing the woods, where the ground was covered with sticks and stones, and on the hot beach, over sharp, broken shells, that I was scarce able to walk at all. Often, when treading with all possible caution, a stone or shell on the beach, or a pointed stick in the woods, would penetrate the old wound, and the extreme anguish would strike me down as

suddenly as if I had been shot. Then I would remain for hours together, with tears gushing from my eyes from the acuteness of the pain. I could travel no more than absolute necessity compelled me in quest of subsistence; and I have sat, my back leaning against a tree, looking out for a vessel during a complete day. Once, while faint from such injuries, as well as smarting under the pain of them, a wild boar rushed towards me. I knew not what to do, for I had not the strength to resist his attack; therefore, as he drew nearer, I caught the bough of a tree, and half suspended myself by means of it. The boar tore away part of my ragged trousers with his tusks, and then left me. This, I think, was the only time that I was attacked by any wild beast; and I considered myself to have had a very great deliverance. As my weakness continued to increase, I often fell to the ground insensible, and then, as also when I laid myself to sleep, I thought I should never wake again or rise in life. Under this affliction I first lost count of the days of the week: I could not distinguish Sunday; and as my illness became more aggravated, I became ignorant of the month also. All this time I had no healing balsam for my feet, nor any cordial to revive my drooping spirits. My utmost efforts could only now and then procure some figs and grapes. Neither had I fire; for though I had heard of a way to procure it by rubbing two sticks together, my attempts in this respect, continued until I was tired, proved abortive. The rains having come on, attended with chill winds, I suffered exceedingly. While passing nine months in this lonely, melancholy, and irksome condition, my thoughts would sometimes wander to my parents; and I reflected, that notwithstanding it would be consolatory to myself if they knew where I was, it might be distressing to them. The nearer my prospect of death, which I often expected, the greater my penitence became.

Some time in November, 1723, I descried a small canoe approaching with a single man; but the sight excited little emotion. I kept my seat on the beach, thinking I could not expect a friend, and knowing that I had no enemy to fear; nor was I capable of resisting one. As the man approached, he betrayed many signs of surprise; he called me to him, and I told him he might safely venture ashore, for I was alone, and almost expiring. Coming close up, he knew not what to make of me; my garb and countenance seemed so singular, that he looked wild with astonishment. He started back a little, and surveyed me more thoroughly; but recovering himself again, came forward, and

taking me by the hand, expressed his satisfaction at seeing me. This stranger proved to be a native of North Britain; he was well advanced in years, of a grave and venerable aspect, and of a reserved temper. His name I never knew; he did not disclose it, and I had not inquired during the period of our acquaintance. But he informed me he had lived twenty-two years with the Spaniards, who now threatened to burn him, though I know not for what crime; therefore he had fled hither as a sanctuary, bringing his dog, gun, and ammunition, as also a small quantity of pork, along with him. He designed spending the remainder of his days on the island, where he could support himself by hunting. I experienced much kindness from the stranger; he was always ready to perform any civil offices, and assist me in whatever he could, though he spoke little. He also gave me a share of his pork.

On the third day after his arrival, he said he would make an excursion in his canoe among the neighbouring islands, for the purpose of killing wild hogs and deer, and wished me to accompany him. Though my spirits were somewhat recruited by his society, the benefit of the fire which I now enjoyed, and dressed provisions, my weakness, and the soreness of my feet, prevented me; therefore he set out alone, saying he would return in a few hours. The sky was serene, and there was no prospect of any danger during a short excursion, seeing he had come nearly twelve leagues in safety in his canoe. But when he had been absent about an hour, a violent gust of wind and rain arose, in which he probably perished, as I never heard of him more. Thus, after having the pleasure of a companion almost three days, I was reduced to my former lonely state as unexpectedly as I had been relieved from it. Yet through God's goodness I was myself preserved, from having been unable to accompany him, and I was left in better circumstances than those in which he had found me; for now I had about five pounds of pork, a knife, a bottle of gunpowder, tobacco, tongs, and flint, by which means my life could be rendered more comfortable. I was enabled to have fire, extremely requisite at this time, being the rainy months of winter: I could cut up a tortoise, and have a delicate broiled meal. Thus, by the help of the fire and dressed provisions, through the blessing of God I began to recover strength, though the soreness of my feet remained. But I had, besides, the advantage of being able now and then to catch a dish of crayfish, which when roasted proved good eating. To accomplish this I made up a small bundle of old broken sticks, nearly resembling pitchpine or candlewood, and having lighted one

end, waded with it in my hand up to the waist in water. The crayfish, attracted by the light, would crawl to my feet, and lie directly under it, when, by means of a forked stick, I could toss them ashore.

Between two and three months after the time of losing my companion, I found a small canoe while ranging along the shore. The sight of it revived my regret for his loss; for I judged that it had been his canoe, and from being washed up here, a certain proof of his having been lost in the tempest. But on examining it more narrowly, I satisfied myself that it was one which I had never seen before. Master of this little vessel, I began to think myself admiral of the neighbouring seas, as well as sole possessor and chief commander of the islands. Profiting by its use, I could transport myself to the places of retreat, more conveniently than by my former expedient of swimming. In process of time I projected an excursion to some of the larger and more distant islands, partly to learn how they were stored or inhabited, and partly for the sake of amusement. Laying in a stock of figs and grapes, therefore, as also some tortoise to eat, and carrying my implements for fire, I put off to steer for the island of Bonacco, which is about four or five leagues long, and situated five or six from Roatan. In the course of the voyage, observing a sloop at the east end of the island, I made the best of my way to the west, designing to travel down by land, both because a point of rocks ran far into the sea, beyond which I did not care to venture in the canoe, as was necessary to come ahead of the sloop, and because I wished to ascertain something concerning her people before I was discovered. Even in my worst circumstances, I never could brook the thoughts of returning on board of any piratical vessel, and resolved rather to live and die in my present situation. Hauling up the canoe, and making it fast as well as I was able, I set out on the journey. My feet were yet in such a state, that two days and the best part of two nights were occupied in it. Sometimes the woods and bushes were so thick, that it was necessary to crawl half a mile together on my hands and knees, which rendered my progress very slow. When within a mile or two of the place where I supposed the sloop might lie, I made for the water side, and approached the sea gradually, that I might not too soon disclose myself to view; however, on reaching the beach, there was no appearance of the sloop, whence I judged that she had sailed during the time spent by me in travelling.

Being much fatigued with the journey, I rested myself against the stump of a tree, with my face towards the sea, where sleep

overpowered me. But I had not slumbered long before I was suddenly awakened by the noise of firing. Starting up in affright, I saw nine peraguas, or large canoes, full of men, firing upon me from the sea; whence I soon turned about, and ran among the bushes as fast as my sore feet would allow, while the men, who were Spaniards, cried after me, "O Englishman, we will give you good quarter." However, my astonishment was so great, and I was so suddenly roused from sleep, that I had no self-command to listen to their offers of quarter, which, it may be, at another time, in my cooler moments, I might have done. Thus I made into the woods, and the strangers continued firing after me, to the number of a hundred and fifty bullets at least, many of which cut small twigs off the bushes close by my side. Having gained an extensive thicket beyond reach of the shot, I lay close several hours, until, observing by the sound of their oars that the Spaniards were departing, I crept out. I saw the sloop under English colours sailing away with the canoes in tow, which induced me to suppose she was an English vessel which had been at the Bay of Honduras, and taken there by the Spaniards. Next day I returned to the tree where I had been so nearly surprised, and was astonished to find six or seven shots in the trunk, within a foot or less of my head. Yet, through the wonderful goodness of God, though having been as a mark to shoot at, I was preserved.

After this I travelled to recover my canoe at the western end of the island, which I reached in three days, but suffering severely from the soreness of my feet and the scantiness of provision. This island is not so plentifully stored as Roatan, so that, during the five or six days of my residence, I had difficulty in procuring subsistence; and the insects were, besides, infinitely more numerous and harassing than at my old habitation. These circumstances deterred me from further exploring the island; and having reached the canoe very tired and exhausted, I put off for Roatan, which was a royal palace to me compared with Bonacco, and arrived at night in safety. Here I lived, if it may be called living, alone for about seven months after losing my North British companion. My time was spent in the usual manner, hunting for food, and ranging among the islands.

Some time in June, 1724, while on the small key, whither I often retreated to be free from the annoyance of insects, I saw two canoes making for the harbour. Approaching nearer, they observed the smoke of a fire which I had kindled, and at a loss to know what it meant, they hesitated to advance. What I had

experienced at Bonacco was still fresh in my memory; and loth to run the risk of such another firing, I withdrew to my canoe, lying behind the key not above a hundred yards distant, and immediately rowed over to Roatan. There I had places of safety against an enemy, and sufficient accommodation for any ordinary number of friends. The people in the canoes observed me cross the sea to Roatan, the passage not exceeding a gunshot over; and being as much afraid of pirates as I was of Spaniards, approached very cautiously towards the shore. I then came down to the beach, showing myself openly; for their conduct led me to think that they could not be pirates, and I resolved, before being exposed to danger of their shot, to inquire who they were. If they proved such as I did not like, I could easily retire. But before I spoke, they, as full of apprehension as I could be, lay on their oars, and demanded who I was, and whence I came; to which I replied, "that I was an Englishman, and had run away from pirates." On this they drew somewhat nearer, inquiring who was there besides myself; when I assured them in return that I was alone. Next, according to my original purpose, having put similar questions to them they had come from the Bay of Honduras. Their words encouraged me to bid them row ashore, which they did accordingly, though at some distance; and one man landed, whom I advanced to meet. But he started back at the sight of a poor, ragged, wild, forlorn, miserable object so near him. Collecting himself, however, he took me by the hand, and we began embracing each other, he from surprise and wonder, and I from a sort of ecstasy of joy. When this was over, he took me in his arms, and carried me down to the canoes, where all his comrades were struck with astonishment at my appearance; but they gladly received me, and I experienced great tenderness from them.

I gave the strangers a brief account of my escape from Low, and my lonely residence for sixteen months, all excepting three days, the hardships I had suffered, and the dangers to which I had been exposed. They stood amazed at the recital. They wondered I was alive, and expressed much satisfaction at being able to relieve me. Observing me very weak and depressed, they gave me about a spoonful of rum to recruit my fainting spirits; but even this small quantity, from my long disuse of strong liquors, threw me into violent agitation, and produced a kind of stupor, which at last ended in privation of sense. Some of the party perceiving a state of insensibility come on, would have administered more rum, which those better skilled among them prevented; and after lying a short

time in a fit, I revived. Then I ascertained that the strangers were eighteen in number, the chief of them, named John Hope, an old man, called Father Hope by his companions, and John Ford, and all belonging to the Bay of Honduras. The cause of their coming hither was an alarm of a threatened attack by the Spaniards from the sea, while the Indians should make a descent by land, and cut off the bay; thus they had fled for safety. On a former occasion, the two persons above named had for the like reason taken shelter among these islands, and lived for four years at a time on a small one named Barbarat, about two leagues from Roatan. There they had two plantations, as they called them; and now they brought two barrels of flour, with other provisions, firearms, dogs for hunting, and nets for tortoises; and also an Indian woman to dress their provisions. Their principal residence was a small key, about a quarter of a mile round, lying near to Barbarat, and named by them the "Castle of Comfort," chiefly because it was low and clear of woods and bushes, so that the free circulation of the wind could drive away the pestiferous mosquitoes and other insects. Hence they sent to the surrounding islands for wood, water, and materials to build two houses, such as they were, for shelter.

I now had the prospect of a much more agreeable life than what I had spent during the sixteen months past; for, besides having company, the strangers treated me with a great deal of civility in their way; they clothed me, and gave me a large wrapping gown as a defence against the nightly dews, until their houses were covered; and there was plenty of provisions. Yet, after all, they were bad society; and as to their common conversation, there was little difference between them and pirates. However, it did not appear that they were now engaged in any such evil design as rendered it unlawful to join them, or be found in their company. In process of time, and with the assistance of my companions, I gathered so much strength as sometimes to be able to hunt along with them. The islands abounded with wild hogs, deer, and tortoise; and different ones were visited in quest of game. This was brought home, where, instead of being immediately consumed, it was hung up to dry in smoke, so as to be a ready supply at all times. I now considered myself beyond the reach of danger from an enemy; for independent of supposing that nothing could bring anyone here, I was surrounded by a number of men with arms constantly in their hands. Yet, at the very time that I thought myself most secure, I was very nearly again falling into the hands of pirates.



Six or seven months after the strangers joined me, three of them along with myself took a four-oared canoe, for the purpose of hunting and killing tortoise on Bonacco. During our absence the rest repaired their canoes, and prepared to go over to the Bay of Honduras, to examine how matters stood there, and bring off their remaining effects, in case it were dangerous to return. But before they had departed, we were on our voyage homewards, having a full load of pork and tortoise, as our object was successfully accomplished. While entering the mouth of the harbour in a moonlight evening, we saw a great flash, and heard a report, much louder than that of a musket, proceed from a large periagua which we observed near the "Castle of Comfort." This put us in extreme consternation, and we knew not what to consider; but in a minute or two we heard a volley from eighteen or twenty small arms discharged towards the shore, and also some returned from it. Satisfied that an enemy, either Spaniards or pirates, was attacking our people, and being intercepted from them by periaguas lying between us and the shore, we thought the safest plan was trying to escape. Therefore, taking down our little mast and sail, that they might not betray us, we rowed out of the harbour as fast as possible, towards an island about a mile and a half distant, trusting to retreat undiscovered. But the enemy, having either seen us before lowering our sails or heard the noise of the oars, followed with all speed in an eight or ten-oared periagua. Observing her approach, and fast gaining on us, we rowed with all our might to make the nearest shore. However, she was at length enabled to discharge a swivel, the shot from which passed over our canoe: nevertheless, we contrived to reach the shore before being completely within the range of small arms, which our pursuers discharged on us while landing. They were now near enough to cry aloud that they were pirates, and not Spaniards, and that we need not dread them, as we should get good quarter, thence supposing that we should be the easier induced to surrender. Yet nothing could have been said to discourage me more from putting myself in their power. I had the utmost dread of a pirate; and my original aversion was now enhanced by the apprehension of being sacrificed for my former desertion. Thus, concluding to keep as clear of them as I could, and the Honduras Bay men having no great inclination to do otherwise, we made the best of our way to the woods. Our pursuers carried off the canoe and all its contents, resolving, if we would not go to them, to deprive us as far as possible of all means of subsistence where we were. But it gave

me, who had known both want and solitude, little concern, now that I had company; and we had arms among us to procure provisions, and also fire wherewith to dress it.

Our assailants were some men belonging to Spriggs, my former commander, who had thrown off his allegiance to Low, and set up for himself at the head of a gang of pirates, with a good ship of twenty-four guns, and a sloop of twelve, both at present lying in Roatan harbour. He had put in for fresh water, and to refit, at the place where I first escaped; and having discovered my companions at the small island of their retreat, sent a perriagua full of men to take them. Accordingly they landed and took all prisoners, even a child and the Indian woman, the last of whom they shamefully abused. They killed a man after landing, and throwing him into one of the canoes containing tar, set it on fire, and burnt his body in it. Then they carried the people on board of their vessels, where they were barbarously treated. One of them turned pirate, however, and told the others that John Hope had hid many things in the woods; therefore they beat him most unmercifully to make him disclose his treasure, which they carried off with them. After the pirates had kept these people five days on board of their vessels, they gave them a flat, of five or six tons, to carry them to the Bay of Honduras, but no kind of provision for the voyage; and further, before dismissal, compelled them to swear they would not come near me and my party, who had escaped to another island. While the vessels rode in the harbour, we kept a good look out, but were exposed to some difficulties from not daring to kindle a fire to dress our victuals, lest our residence should be betrayed. Thus we lived for five days on raw provisions. As soon as they sailed, however, Hope, little regarding the oath extorted from him, came and informed us of what had passed; and I could not, for my own part, be sufficiently grateful to Providence for escaping the hands of the pirates, who would have put me to a cruel death.

Hope, and all his people, except John Symonds, now resolved to make their way to the Bay. Symonds, who had a negro, wished to remain some time, for the purpose of trading with the Jamaica men on the main. But thinking my best chance of getting to New England was from the Bay of Honduras, I requested Hope to take me with him. The old man, though he would have gladly done so, advanced many objections, such as the insufficiency of the flat to carry so many men seventy leagues; that they had no provision for the passage, which might be tedious, and the flat was, besides,

ill calculated to stand the sea; as also, that it was uncertain how matters might turn out at the Bay. Thus he thought it better for me to remain; yet, rather than I should be in solitude, he would take me in. Symonds, on the other hand, urged me to stay and bear him company, and gave several reasons why I should more likely obtain a passage from the Jamaica men to New England, than by the Bay of Honduras. As this seemed a fairer prospect of reaching my home, which I was extremely anxious to do, I assented; and having thanked Hope and his companions for their civilities, I took leave of them, and they departed. Symonds was provided with a canoe, firearms, and two dogs, in addition to his negro, by which means he felt confident of being able to provide all that was necessary for our subsistence. We spent two or three months after the usual manner, ranging from island to island; but the prevalence of the winter rains precluded us from obtaining more game than we required.

When the season for the Jamaica traders approached, Symonds proposed repairing to some other islands, to obtain a quantity of tortoise-shell, which he could exchange for clothes and shoes; and being successful in this respect, we next proceeded to Bonaccoco, which lies nearer the main, that we might thence take a favourable opportunity to run over. Having been a short time at Bonaccoco, a furious tempest arose, and continued for three days, when we saw several vessels standing in for the harbour. The largest of them anchored at a great distance, but a brigantine came over the shoals opposite to the watering-place, and sent her boat ashore with casks. Recognizing three people who were in the boat by their dress and appearance for Englishmen, I concluded they were friends, and showed myself openly on the beach before them. They ceased rowing immediately on observing me; and after answering their inquiries of who I was, I put the same question, saying they might come ashore with safety. They did so, and a happy meeting it was for me. I now found that the vessels were a fleet under convoy of the *Diamond* man-of-war, bound for Jamaica; but many ships had parted company in the storm. The *Diamond* had sent in the brigantine to get water here, as the sickness of her crew had occasioned a great consumption of that necessary article. Symonds, who had kept at a distance, lest the three men might hesitate to come ashore, at length approached to participate in my joy, though, at the same time, testifying considerable reluctance at the prospect of my leaving him. The brigantine was commanded by Captain Dove, with whom I was acquainted, and she belonged to Salem,

within three miles of my father's house. Captain Dove not only treated me with great civility, and engaged to give me a passage home, but took me into pay, having lost a seaman, whose place he wanted me to supply. Next day, the *Diamond* having sent her long-boat ashore with casks for water, they were filled; and after taking leave of Symonds, who shed tears at parting, I was carried on board of the brigantine.

We sailed along with the *Diamond*, which was bound for Jamaica, in the latter end of March, 1725, and kept company until April 1. By the providence of Heaven we passed safely through the Gulf of Florida, and reached Salem Harbour on May 1, two years ten months and fifteen days after I was first taken by pirates, and two years and nearly two months after making my escape from them on Roatan Island. That same evening I went to my father's house, where I was received as one risen from the dead.

# THE MAN WHO SWALLOWED A CONTINENT

*By*  
A. J. RUSSELL

**T**HE warlike Matabele called themselves "Children of the Stars."

For Cecil Rhodes they invented a name which was as happy and even more expressive. They called him "The man who eats up countries for breakfast."

In a very short life of less than fifty years this Englishman, a practical dreamer full of restless energy and dynamic force, ate up the whole Matabele country and a vast territory in Central Africa, totalling nearly a million square miles. During his own lifetime he experienced that rare honour of giving his own name to a great country, one which we all know as Rhodesia.

His admirers called him empire-builder. His enemies called him an unscrupulous rogue. He was an Elizabethan adventurer who flourished in the reign of Queen Victoria. No one now disputes that he was the greatest man that South Africa has yet seen.

Bryce, the historian, whose Liberalism made him an opponent of Rhodes, frankly admitted that "from Cape Town to the Zambesi, it is all Rhodes. When I asked who built that, who made this industry, who created that, who is responsible for this, I got one reply—Rhodes."

The Boers said of him that he was "damnably like an Englishman." Some Englishmen thought him "a god from Olympus" for he was the greatest Imperialist our race has ever known. Mark Twain said of this British missionary towering over his fellows that as he stood at the Cape his shadow fell on the Zambesi. Rhodes said of himself that his shadow must fall much farther. His great aim was to paint the map red, especially the map of Africa; it must be British from Cape to Cairo. He argued that since God had blessed and expanded England it was clear that He had chosen her as a special instrument for the governance of the world. It was our duty to co-operate with that plan and bring it to fulfilment. He hoped even to reunite the British and American sections

of the Anglo-Saxon race under one flag, thereby to ensure the peace of the world.

Though his ideal was a vast British Empire he was not an idealist in his methods of acquiring it. He admitted openly that in the pressure of events and circumstances he would do things in a rough-and-ready manner and without squeamishness. He had to be tough to keep his hold on the hard metal souls of the South African pioneers whom he dominated. Yet he managed—and he was perhaps the first to do it—to combine big business with romance. Not the romance which comes from love of women, but from love of country and race. He believed that the supreme good was to make himself useful to England. And because he saw his country in danger of being checked in the scramble for Africa he did risky unconventional things with a frank crudity which he brazenly admitted and for which in time he suffered. He was obstructed, lionized, denounced, condemned, forgiven; many times was he publicly honoured, finally with a State funeral. But he was a gallant adventurer, the like of which this country may never see again.

As a boy Cecil Rhodes left his father's home—an English rectory—and a family of twelve because, he said, he was bored with the eternal cold mutton. He arrived in South Africa when he was sixteen, a tubercular youth given by his doctor no more than six months to live. His father had sent some of his elder children to Eton; but there was not enough money in the living to pay for Cecil to be educated so expensively. Yet at eighteen he was earning £100 a week and at nineteen he was back in England paying his own fees as an Oxford undergraduate, and in vacations returning to his work in South Africa.

He found that entry to Oxford was not easy. Because he had not matriculated, University College passed him on to Oriel who received him very ungraciously, lamenting that all the failures from the former college were sent to them. The word failure as applied to a youth already earning £5,000 a year Rhodes bitterly resented, and he was later to return to Oxford and see the faculty there eat its own words as they paid honour to him.

He was scathing, too, about some of his own brothers who, judged by Varsity standards, were successes. They could ride and shoot and fish remarkably well; in other words, said he, they were quite good loafers. Once he said, "I have four brothers in the British Army, and not one of them is efficient enough to take a company through Hyde Park Gate."

They said of the boy Rhodes that he was a solitary spirit

compound of moody silence and impulsive action. But no one ever accused him of inefficiency. All recognized that he had a way with him. An energetic young intellectual who proposed to take over the government of the world must needs be treated with respect. At thirty, men twice his age called him "The old man" and gave him the trust and confidence usually accorded to persons of vast experience.

When young Rhodes first arrived in Africa, diamonds had just been found in Kimberley. A Dutch farmer, named De Beer, saw a neighbour's children playing at marbles, and one of the stones was white and bright. The neighbour gave him the stone which he showed to a jeweller who thought it valueless. It was referred to others and the Cape government, glad of some further proof of the value of their country, bought it for £500. De Beer kept his eyes open for more diamonds. He spotted one suspending from the neck of a native medicine man, who was induced to part with it. This one weighed eighty-three carats, was named "Star of South Africa," and was sold for £25,000! After that everybody began to look for diamonds, and many were found on the open veldt. And so began the rush to Kimberley, the Tom Tiddler's Ground of the Empire.

Into an atmosphere of claim and concession, sudden wealth and sudden tragedy, walked Cecil Rhodes, a thoughtful auburn-haired youth who carried himself with an air of good breeding and secretly determined to make Kimberley the jumping-off ground for a tremendous career. Yet he was hopelessly untidy and careless about his personal appearance. On his first home-coming he had only one pair of trousers to his name and once he was forced to retire to his cabin that these might be repaired. When later he attended parliament he scandalized the Conservative members by his unconventional garb. He replied that he could legislate just as well in tweeds as he could in sables. He for one had no faith in the tradition that to succeed one must be well dressed.

Rhodes started as an ordinary diamond-digger on claims first pegged out by his brother Herbert. The other diggers saw him, a sullen and silent boy, scraping at his pebbles, debris round him, windlasses turning, buckets crashing, natives chanting. Very soon he had shown more capacity than his brother for controlling these lucky claims. Even in those early days it was said that Rhodes had the face and carriage of a Roman Emperor. When later he presided at company meetings this phenomenal boy could more than hold his own with the hard-faced men of his Board. Without a

THE MAN WHO SWALLOWED A CONTINENT



CECIL RHODES

*Cecil Rhodes went out to South Africa to die—and lived to become the greatest Empire builder in all Empire history.*



## COLUMBUS BLAZES THE TRAIL TO THE WEST



### A SHIP THAT MADE HISTORY

*A reconstruction of the "Santa Maria," the flagship of Columbus on that epic voyage when he discovered a new world*

note to guide him he would stand and think right through a balance sheet, discussing exhaustively all the intricate details of the mines, costs, receipts, prospects, weights, and be scrupulously correct in everything he said.

Though he made most of his money from diamonds he was quick to see other business possibilities; and he undertook to provide the machinery needed to keep the mines of others clear of water. On his first return from Oxford he found that the De Beers mine had been badly flooded. He offered to install a pump and keep the mine dry, and his tender was accepted. One day the boiler of his engine burst. Kimberley was then a long distance from the rest of civilization. The only alternative machinery fit for the job was owned by a farmer living eight days' journey away. Rhodes hastened to the farm. The farmer said that it had taken him a long time to get his machinery and it would be extremely foolish of him to part with it and that Rhodes must wait until more was sent out from England. Rhodes expostulated that he would pay handsomely.

"I'm not going to sell," said the stolid farmer.

"Think it over. I'll come back," said Rhodes.

"I shall not alter my mind," said the farmer.

This went on for some days. But the farmer's wife, admiring the persistence of the English lad, frequently asked him to the house for meals. In the end the farmer said:

"You two are making my life a misery. Take the plant and be off. But you must pay a stiff price for it."

Rhodes, who would have paid double, had intended to stay there and keep arguing with the farmer until he got the plant. He was a natural psychologist. He knew that few human beings can indefinitely hold out against friendly importunity.

That was his first big deal; it was the forerunner of many, for Rhodes was always doing the big things in the grand way. His next important achievement was to get control of all the diamond mines in Kimberley and thereby ninety per cent of the world's output. He obtained control of De Beers.

His rival was Barney Barnato, a Jew, who had dealt in almost every commodity in South Africa. Barney was from the East End of London and uneducated. But he knew the value of his mine.

He knew too that Rhodes was buying his shares with a view to obtaining control, and he refused to sell.

Rhodes did many things to prove to him the advantages of union. One day, after there had been heavy rains, men of the

De Beers company went out to the mine and picked up diamonds like mushrooms. Rhodes showed them to Barney—twelve thousand carats. Barney, who knew that one diamond of eighty-three carats, had fetched £25,000, was impressed. But he would not come in. Rhodes played his trump card. There was a club in Kimberley to which only the élite had an entry—the Kimberley Club. Rhodes told Barney that he would make him a member of this club and thus turn him into a gentleman. That shook him. But still he held out. In the end, on condition that he was made a life governor of the new company, he agreed to sell. Rhodes had now won a vast fortune, and something which was far more dear to his heart—the means by which he could paint Africa red. He made a provision whereby the new company should use some of its profits for beginning his Cape to Cairo railway and for pursuing his idea of British expansion through Central Africa northwards. He said: "We sat down one night to complete the amalgamation. There were three of us who held the principal interest in the diamond mines. Each made a condition and I agreed to those of my two friends. As for myself I said, 'I want it put in the trust deed that we have power to go to the Zambesi or farther north to spend the money of the company, if thought advisable to acquire a country and form an empire.'

"My friends would not agree but I was obstinate and we sat there till four o'clock in the morning. They got tired and, seeing that I was determined, one of them at last said: 'You have queer ideas. Some people have a fancy for this thing, and some for that thing, but you have a fancy for making an empire. Well, I suppose we must give in to you, *but it isn't business.*'"

Nor was it business. But Rhodes said afterwards in Rhodesia: "I got my way; I got my way; and you got your railway!" Barnato said: "The worst of Rhodes is that when you have been with him for half an hour you not only agree with him but you come to believe that you have always held his opinion." And so was formed a trust deed giving to De Beers more power than had been held by any other private body since the great days of the East India Company. Poor Barnato. He did not live to see Rhodes's dreams come to fruition. He jumped overboard from a liner and drowned himself.

Another of Rhodes's earliest colleagues, who later was to send him reeling from his pedestal, was Dr. Jameson, a medical man, attracted to Kimberley by the love of adventure. In those fierce early days Rhodes and Jameson, occupying a tin bungalow, would

argue about the future of the continent. Jameson would smoke his endless chain of cigarettes, and Rhodes, already grown stout, would roll in his chair like a whale in the sea.

The talk was always of the north—"My North" as Rhodes came to call it. As he used the word Rhodes would thrust an arm upwards and outwards in a northerly direction to convey his idea of the vastness of the interior—unclaimed and unknown. The Portuguese could keep their coast. But did Dr. Jameson realize that to the north, the great plateau of the African continent continued up to the Sudan—cool under the equator—an ideal country for white men? Could Jameson imagine it settled, like America, with homesteads and cities, and railways between them—as big as the United States, as populous, and British from Cape to Cairo? Had Jameson realized that here in the north was something to make up to England for those thirteen colonies that she had lost to the United States?

Jameson was unimpressed, even ribald. Rhodes told him that it was no laughing matter; it was of infinitely greater importance than his medicines, his pills and his pregnancies. Could not Jameson understand that it was as important to amalgamate South Africa as it was to amalgamate the diamond mines? Kruger wanted the north. Rhodes was going to get it for England. Rhodes held that if he repeated an idea often enough people would believe it. In time, Dr. Jameson became a convert. Still later he became one of the National Convention that formed the Union of South Africa. First he had some ups and downs, and some of these were shared by the inspired leader with whom he discussed the north so often in that tin hut in Kimberley. But before his struggle for the north really began Rhodes returned to Cape Town as member of Parliament. He was not a great speaker; he had no time for flamboyant oratory; but he had ideas, original flaming ideas for the enlargement of the colony; and these he expressed tersely in conversational tones. At embarrassing moments his voice would suddenly change to a high *falsetto*. At first the Cape Parliament did not know what to make of this masterful and sometimes scornful young enthusiast who delighted in the joy of combat and who had such astounding plans for the future of Africa. But in time they were captivated by his dreams, and they made him their premier.

Rhodes's greatest dream was always the perfection of the human race, and he had unbounded admiration for those persons who were engaged in this task. He met General William Booth and exclaimed in admiration: "Look at what Booth is doing!" He

envied the old general and his religion though he could not share it with him. Once he said in answer to a question: "I happy? Good God, no! I would give all I possess if I could believe what that old man believes." Though he was not religious, he insisted on the children being taught religion in the schools. And he would say: "I defy anybody to attend a church service without being the better for it." A son of the Church, he was not a churchman: that which he saw in all religions was his own religion—the betterment of humanity. A bishop stayed at his house and asked him if he were coming to hear him preach on Sunday morning. Rhodes said no, he was going to his own service in the open air of Table Mountain.

He met General Gordon and felt towards him very much as he felt towards General Booth. One day Gordon told Rhodes: "You always contradict me. I never saw such a man for his own opinion. You think you are always right and everyone else is wrong."

Young Rhodes coolly replied: "I have studied my subject from all sides."

"But not from mine," said Gordon tersely.

Yet it was because Rhodes studied his subjects from all sides that he was so thorough in what he did. He had a particular liking for Gordon who was a "doer" like himself, a man who would go on indefinitely, alone if necessary, to achieve what he thought was good for his country. And when Gordon asked him to go with him to the Sudan to help in the struggle with the Mahdi, head of the rebel Dervishes, Rhodes felt greatly honoured. Rhodes's view was that the best thing for Gordon to do was to "square the Mahdi." Hence "squaring the Mahdi" became a phrase of derision to be levelled against Rhodes whenever he accomplished something important. It was always assumed that he had squared somebody, and Rhodes himself boasted that he found it easier to remove by argument than by force anyone who obstructed his plans.

Yet he was kindly and generous. It was his creed to be both. One day there came to him a man whose face he did not like, begging for money. Rhodes refused; he heard afterwards that the man had committed suicide that same night. From then onwards he felt unable to refuse anything to anyone in need. He gave in sums from five pounds to five thousand pounds. He wrote I.O.U.'s and made out cheques on odd slips of paper, and his secretaries cashed them. When, very rarely, men returned to him the money

they had borrowed, he expressed the greatest surprise, for he had never expected to see it again; he called one man a — fool for troubling to repay a big loan.

But small men who borrowed comparatively small sums did not really concern Rhodes. His mind was always wandering northwards to the bigger possibilities, the millions of unemployed negroes, the millions of uncharted miles, the undiscovered mines of gold and diamonds which must be put to the service of the British Empire before the rest of Europe awoke to the possibilities of Darkest Africa. He looked across the Boer Republic to Bechuanaland, a narrow country reaching northwards, and he dubbed it his "Suez Canal into the interior." That was an essential first step. Because of Rhodes's insistence, this key to the north soon became a British Protectorate. The trail to Cairo was begun.

He had trouble with John Mackenzie, a missionary, now appointed special commissioner of this territory. To Rhodes, Mackenzie was a man with a distorted vision; he saw only the welfare of the natives; Rhodes saw their welfare through a vast enlargement of the British power. Regarding Mackenzie as an obstructive Little Englander, Rhodes henceforth became hostile to other missionaries thinking they all held the same views as Mackenzie. He warned them that the negroes must be made worthy of the country in which they lived, or they were certain, by an inexorable law, to lose it. "You will not make them worthy if you let them sit in idleness."

With Rhodes it was always "Push on, push on, always push on farther. The road must be made ready for those coming behind us." He heard that a great Dutch trek was starting towards Matabeleland along that road he had planned for the British occupation. He decided to push the government towards swift action or they would lose for ever the "balance of the map" in Africa. He sent men to Lobengula, chief of the Matabele, charged to get a concession of all the mineral rights in his territories. He got the concessions, but his rivals raised doubts in Lobengula's mind. The chieftain sent messengers to London to see if a great White Queen really existed. They brought back a photograph of Queen Victoria and a shrewd message from her advising him not to part with all of his rights to one person.

And now Rhodes secured a charter for the whole of Matabeleland from the British government, and forthwith sent his men along to prospect for gold in that part of Lobengula's dominions

known as Mashonaland. So eager was he to get the charter, that Rhodes offered to pay at once the monies due under it—thirty thousand pounds for telegraphs to Mafeking, and four thousand pounds a year for a British resident in Bulawayo. "Not so fast," he was told, "wait until the charter is granted."

Rhodes could wait for nothing. He was an ailing man, his heart was threatening to give out. "Everything in the world is too short," he said. "Life and fame and achievement . . . a third of one's life is lost in waiting for people who have failed to keep appointments and in trying to find out if our friends are telling the truth."

Lobengula, told by enemies of Rhodes that the Englishman was an imposter, received Dr. Jameson who cured him of sore eyes and convinced him that his employer could be trusted. Rhodes was a man of magic, of phenomenal luck. He was at his zenith, controller of the destiny of practically the whole of South Africa. He could not go wrong. So now the Dutch tried to "square their Mahdi." They attempted to convert Rhodes to the republican idea and suggested that he should become their first president. He said: "No. You take me either for a rogue or a fool. I would be a rogue to forfeit all my history and traditions, and I would be a fool because I would be hated by all my countrymen and mistrusted by yours. If I forfeit my own flag what have I left? If you take away my flag you take away everything."

Trouble broke out in the north between Rhodes's settlers and the Matabele. It was felt that until this savage race was crushed there was little hope for the safety of the whites. Rhodes was alarmed. Jameson sent him a message saying that the raids of the Matabele could no longer be tolerated and that he intended to fight. Rhodes told him to read "Luke xiv, 31." Jameson, not a regular student of his Bible, looked up the reference and read: "What king going to make war against another king sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?"

Jameson telegraphed to the effect that he had read this verse and was quite sure of himself. War started. Lobengula polished up the rusty old rifles, the coinage in which Rhodes had partly paid for his mining rights, but they were no good against Jameson's machine-guns. A small British force was wiped out but Lobengula and his men had to fly. Feeling that his end was near, the great chieftain called his warriors round him and made a pathetic farewell: "I did not ever wish to fight Rhodes and

Jameson but you . . . urged me so that I yielded. Now I am an outcast. You forced me to kill the man who advised me to remain friendly with Rhodes. He was my friend and not . . . you; but he has gone and I am following him. Go now all of you to Rhodes and seek his protection, he will be your chief and friend."

Lobengula died of smallpox. On hearing of his death, Rhodes arranged to undertake the education and be responsible for the old chief's sons; and he saw that Lobengula's wishes in other respects were carried out. Addressing the troops, Rhodes said that he was proud of them as "the conquerors of Matabeleland." Yet Jameson was lucky. But for Rhodes's foresight in sending another body of irregulars and so catching the Matabele between two fires, Jameson would have been defeated. He had no reserves.

Now Rhodes began to play Cæsar in the north. It was decided that the native territory of Pondoland should be subdued. Sigcau, chief of a tribe numbering two hundred and twenty-five thousand, was giving trouble. A British governor had been kept waiting three days for an interview, Rhodes, with Jameson's army in the background, sent the chief a peremptory order to come to his camp at once! This unusual treatment made Sigcau sit up. He obeyed, but Rhodes, in view of the indignity put upon the governor, put Sigcau off until three days had elapsed. By this time the chief had become much less bellicose. When the parley began, Rhodes bluntly told Sigcau that he and his chiefs were unfit to govern themselves and that they must obey him. Then, just to show that he meant business, he took Sigcau and his chiefs to a field of mealies on which some machine-guns had been trained. He invited the natives to observe closely. The guns opened fire and the crop of mealies was cut down. The natives saw and shuddered. "That is what will happen to you if you give us any more trouble," said Rhodes sternly. So in less than a month he had ended a long drawn out squabble with Sigcau that might have set Africa alight.

And now trouble arose in the Transvaal. Ever since the war with Britain, when the Boers had won the battle of Majuba, there had been growing a bitter hostility between the Transvaal Dutch and the British. President Kruger and his Boers were a farming community who had trekked north to escape becoming controlled by the industrial and ambitious British. But the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley was followed by the discovery of gold in the Transvaal. And what a discovery! The Ridge of White



Waters, subsequently known as The Rand, became the world's richest mine. Men flocked to the Transvaal as they had flocked to Kimberley on the discovery of the diamond mines. Rhodes went to the Rand but arrived rather later, though still in time to found his Goldfields' Company.

The discovery of gold in the Transvaal resulted in attracting to the country the very people whom the quiet farming Dutch wished to avoid. The new-comers, Uitlanders, as the non-Dutch were called, outnumbered the rest of the population. Kruger and his Boers became alarmed, fearful of again losing their country to the British. When Bechuanaland and Matabeleland fell to the Union Jack, the Boers became still more alarmed. The Uitlanders, if they were not treated as badly as the Israelites in Egypt, were severely discriminated against. They were taxed, thwarted and annoyed in every way. They sent a deputation to President Kruger, who told them bluntly: "Go back and tell your people I shall never give you anything. I shall never change my policy. And now let the storm burst!"

Kruger was shrewd, audacious, overbearing and arrogant. Yet he was a God-fearing Christian of the Old Testament type. With him was no compromise. He once opened a new Jewish synagogue "in the name of Jesus Christ." He was the one man with whom Rhodes could not make a deal. Once Rhodes had offered to help him get Delagoa Bay from the Portuguese, and Kruger had stolidly replied that as the Portuguese would not sell he could not take it, for stolen goods were accursed. Kruger said afterwards: "This young man I like not; he goes too fast for me. He has robbed me of the north. I cannot understand how he manages it. He never sleeps and he will not smoke."

When Kruger had told the Uitlanders to let the storm burst he was thinking that Holland and Germany would help him if the British government gave them their support. For a time England refused active interference. So the Uitlanders, with the secret connivance of Rhodes, decided to act on their own. Because they were so numerous they believed they could rise up and take the country, and that England, led by Joseph Chamberlain, would then give approval to the accomplished fact. In ten years' time secret State papers will be opened and these will reveal the real inside story of the Jameson raid. Until then the degree of culpability of Joseph Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes has to be largely assumed.

On a strip of territory six miles wide at the Boer frontier, Dr.

Jameson mustered a company of irregular troops. At a given signal they were to march into Johannesburg and co-operate with the non-Dutch Uitlanders in seizing the country. Some hint of this was communicated to Joseph Chamberlain in London, but that statesman did not openly encourage the project. Yet it was thought in Africa that he was favourable to it. Rhodes was never satisfied that the scheme was a good one though he was a party to it. While he sought for a better way to redress the grievances of the Uitlanders, he kept Dr. Jameson waiting on the frontier. He thought he could keep him there indefinitely. But Jameson grew restive; his troops began to melt away. Unless he acted at once he would not be able to act at all. Rhodes sent him a wire ordering him not to move. The wire did not reach him in time and he moved forward—to disaster.

Before leaving, Jameson's inexperienced and inadequate force was given three days in which to consume thirty-six cases of champagne and large quantities of whisky. In fact the soldier who was responsible for cutting the telegraph wire to the Boer capital of Pretoria was so drunk that he went out and severed the barbed wire of a farmer's fence and solemnly buried the ends.

Dr. Jameson was foolishly over-confident. In his first command against the Matabele he had been astonishingly lucky, and he expected a continuance of that luck when he marched into the Transvaal, at the head of a raiding force from a neighbouring state supposed to be at peace with the world. But his long wait at the frontier had been observed by the Boers, who had immediately guessed his purpose. The telegraph line which should have been cut flashed to them the news that the frontier had been crossed, and Boer commandoes, who had long been expecting the order, placed themselves in positions across the road to Johannesburg. The raid was a farce. Surrounded by a superior force, unsupported by the Uitlanders, the raiders were compelled to surrender after a feeble show of force. Dr. Jameson and his troops and some of the Uitlanders were imprisoned for a time and then handed over to the British government to be dealt with. The leader was taken to London, and at Bow Street charged with making war on a friendly state and sentenced to a short term of imprisonment. There was a great outcry made by the Liberals of that day against the leniency of the sentence and prison treatment to which Dr. Jameson was subjected. It was clear that the Conservative government then in power was favourably disposed towards the raiders.

For Rhodes, the failure of the raid was serious. He had recently

been made a privy councillor, his own name had just been given to a great new part of the British Empire, and he was still premier of Cape Colony. At first he wondered if the raid would affect the name of his new country. He said: "They can't change my name. Did you ever hear of a country's name being changed?" Had he been able, like Joseph Chamberlain, publicly to disclaim official connection with the raid, he might have continued in office. But this he could not and would not do. He must not only resign his premiership but he too must face a public inquiry in London. Moreover, he had held power in Cape Colony largely on the Dutch vote, for he had always stood for equal treatment of British and Dutch in Cape Colony. Now his Dutch supporters turned from him in contempt.

Schreiner, a member of his cabinet, was the first to see Rhodes after the news had come to him that Jameson had marched into the Transvaal. Himself unaware of what had happened, Schreiner had come to warn his chief not to get mixed up with the Uitlanders. The premier was in his study—"utterly different," said Schreiner.

Said Rhodes dismally:

"It is all true. Old Jameson has upset my apple cart."

"What do you mean?"

"He has ridden in. Go and write out your resignation."

The news that the government must resign staggered Schreiner.

"Why didn't you tell me yesterday?"

"I thought I had stopped him on the border."

"Poor old Jameson," Rhodes went on still more dismally.

"Twenty years we have been friends. And now he ruins me. I could not hinder him. Now that he's done it I can't destroy him."

At that moment Rhodes was a broken man. But hope came suddenly—from an unexpected quarter. The Kaiser sent his foolish telegram congratulating Kruger on saving his country from the raiders. Immediately Rhodes, the opportunist, saw his way out. "This justifies me!" he exclaimed. And to the majority of the people of England he was completely justified by that telegram. For it told Rhodes's own countrymen what home and Cape governments already suspected, that Kruger was secretly in agreement with Germany over Africa. Moreover, the British public were outraged that another European country should openly interfere in a business which, however bad, was the concern of only Briton and Boer. That telegram caused a revulsion of British feeling towards Rhodes as the instigator and Jameson as the leader of the abortive raid.

But Rhodes was not to be allowed an easy escape. The Cape Dutch had no intentions of forgiving their English premier for sending British troops against their fellow-Dutch of the Transvaal. Their leader, Hofmeyr, said that: "If Rhodes is behind the raid he is no more a friend of mine." He told Rhodes that he must repudiate Jameson, and Rhodes refused to do it.

"Say no more," said Hofmeyr caustically. "I quite understand."

Yet Rhodes did not despair of winning back his old friend and of getting from him some consolation over his fall. When next Hofmeyr called, Rhodes humbly asked for advice, hoping that he would be told that he was not so black as he was now being painted.

"What am I to do? Live it down? How can I? Am I to get rid of myself?"

The affronted Dutchman was a Job's comforter. He did not counsel suicide, but his advice was almost as bad. Rhodes should retire from parliament and lose himself in Rhodesia—his own country. Rhodes reacted as though he were a young king insulted.

Hofmeyr said openly that his friend Rhodes's association with the raid had made him feel like a man who discovered his wife deceiving him. That phrase Rhodes heard many times, with the result that he would say derisively before it was uttered: "Oh yes, I know—about the unfaithful wife." Yet he declared that his troubles had made him a better man.

He rejected the advice to retire from parliament; he asserted that his political life had just begun. With redoubled strength of will he set himself to work again, work which took him mainly to the north. But he had to face an inquiry in London by a select committee, which found that he had failed in his duties as a public man and had seriously embarrassed the imperial and colonial governments, causing grave injury to British influence in South Africa; yet the committee said there was nothing in the whole affair dishonouring to his personal character. He had told the committee there had been discontent in the South African Republic, that after long efforts they despaired of obtaining redress by constitutional means and were resolved to seek, by extra constitutional means, such a change in the government as should give to the majority of the population, possessing more than half the land, nine-tenths of the wealth, and paying nineteen-twentieths of the taxes, a due share in its administration. And England sympathized with him.

There was trouble now over Rhodesia. His chartered company did not find there the gold they expected, and his shares, which had

soared to almost ten times their par value, dropped to a third of the top price. In time, however, they paid a dividend—sixpence! There was other trouble. The Matabele rebelled, and Rhodes was determined that the rebellion should be crushed under his direction. He participated in many skirmishes and was frequently fired at but never shot.

Then he formed a plan, which his friends said was suicidal. Emulating Gordon in the Sudan, he proposed to go alone among the Matabele and parley with them for peace. They were beaten and starving and hiding in the hills. He would be their saviour. Besides, something had to be done. It would take a long time for the Matabele to starve, and the chartered company, if they waited without doing anything, would go bankrupt. He sent a native to invite the chiefs to meet him. An old woman, an ancient crone, one of the wives of Lobengula's father, appeared through the bush on the Matoppos. She said that the chiefs were coming. Rhodes's friends warned him that he would be killed. Heedless, he took three white men and set out. Black men appeared and Rhodes exulted. There would be no more war. Twenty chiefs sat round him in a circle.

"Is it peace?" asked Rhodes.

"It is peace, my father."

The chiefs ventilated all their grievances. They complained, among other things, of harsh treatment by Rhodes's native police. "They shall go," said Rhodes. "Is it peace? Are the eyes white?"

One of the chiefs threw down a reed, token of surrender.

"There is my assegai."

"I accept your word. Tell your people to send in their arms," said Rhodes, who had "squared his Mahdi" again.

A week later Rhodes met the Matabele once more, but the chiefs were not present. The men were armed and looked hostile. Rhodes ordered them to lay down their arms. His companions warned him not to dismount until they had done so. He disobeyed the advice, sat down on a boulder, while the older men harangued the hot-heads. Presently the young men threw down their guns and assegais and hailed him as father.

He travelled to their kraals and dispensed hospitality as Lobengula had done. Slowly the chiefs came in, declaring that they used to be fat, now they were only bones; they looked to Rhodes to make them fat again. He agreed to do it. His handling of the situation was masterly throughout.

Rhodes's friends were furious at the delays. But he understood the natives and waited patiently until the last chief had submitted, and all had declared that Rhodes was their father and there was for ever peace between white and black in Rhodesia. Rhodes returned to Cape Town triumphant. He was accorded a great reception. Already the conqueror of the Matabele was forgiven for moving too fast in the Transvaal. Oxford invited Kitchener and Rhodes to come down and receive a degree; they went, and Rhodes evoked the most cheers.

But there were black clouds rising again in the Boer Republic. Rhodes was convinced that there would be no war and, having burnt his fingers before, determined to keep out of trouble that was brewing. But the Boer War came and Rhodes decided that he must be in it. Against the wishes of the British authorities, he went north to Kimberley and stayed there during the siege. Sometimes his presence was an embarrassment to the officers in charge of the defence, for his brain was better than that of half a dozen generals. At one time he was in danger of being arrested for interfering with the military. He was critical of the British forces sent to relieve Kimberley, and talked of organizing an army to relieve the British Army. The Boers themselves would sooner have captured Rhodes than the British Army. They threatened to put him in an iron cage and parade him through the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Rhodes was greatly amused by their threats. His reply was not without humour. The British guns in Kimberley were outranged by the German guns used by the Boers. So Rhodes, though a civilian, knowing nothing of gun-making, ordered one of the engineers working on his diamond mines to build a big gun from a specification which happened to be in a Kimberley office. The experiment was successful. The big new gun, made by amateurs, was a match for those trained on the city. Its shells, sent into the Boer camp, were labelled: "With the compliments of Cecil Rhodes!"

At one time Rhodes also contrived to amuse the Kaiser. Received by the all-highest in Berlin, he paid little attention to court etiquette. He chaffed his host on sending the congratulatory telegram to Kruger. He talked on and the Kaiser became more and more engrossed in the tales told by this vital Englishman. Then Rhodes suddenly looked at his watch and without waiting, as is customary, to be dismissed, he suddenly thrust out his hand: "Well good-bye, sir. I have to go now. I have some people coming to dinner."

The Prince of Wales (King Edward VII) afterwards closely questioned Rhodes concerning the interview. When told that the Kaiser had readily agreed to a British telegraph line through German territory to the north of Africa, the prince said: "You were fortunate, Mr. Rhodes; he is sometimes very difficult."

All his life Rhodes had been suffering from a weak heart. Towards the end he spent many terrible days struggling for air. Death came to him at last in 1902, two months before the end of the Boer War, when he was still only forty-nine. It was not an easy death, not so easy as he had anticipated.

Before bringing the Matabele to their final submission in the Matoppo, he made the discovery of a hill from which a marvellous view could be obtained. The ascent, he declared, was so easy that an old lady could climb it without assistance. Once he walked about the crest admiring the view, which was indeed fine, though there are finer ones in Africa. He burst forth: "I shall be buried here," and he pointed to a spot in front of some vast round boulders. He sat down and meditated. Presently he exclaimed: "The peace of it all; the chaotic grandeur; it creates a feeling of awe and brings home to one how very small we all are. I call this one of the world's views." And "The World's View" it was called.

They left, and two years afterwards were unable to find the hill. Days were spent in searching for it. A cloudburst had created a new river course which misled them. Rhodes became very irritable. When they succeeded in locating it he said, relieved: "I had to find my hill; I had to find it; it has stayed with me ever since I saw it last."

The world knows that Rhodes lies buried on "World's View" and that, given a state funeral, his coffin was carried on a gun-carriage up the black slope of his hill. That day in 1902 "World's View" was swarming with his mourning Matabele, who cried: "Our father is dead." Though he had taken from them their country, he had succoured them in their need; and for this they gave to him, the only white man who has received it, their royal salute of "Bayete."

Rhodes never married. He said that a man so interested in imperial affairs as he was could not give the time necessary to looking after a wife and home. Many single women strove to capture him as their husband. Many wives wrote to him to express their admiration of his work. Towards the end, a European princess sailed on his boat in order to get to know him.

In Africa she would sometimes be seen riding with him. She forged his name to a cheque for a large sum and he insisted on her being prosecuted.

Queen Victoria asked him if he were a woman-hater, and he replied gallantly that he could not hate the sex of which his queen was the most honoured ornament.

There was, however, one woman in his life whom he specially honoured—a negress with senile eyes, empty sagging breasts, and skeleton hands. She was the stepmother of Lobengula, the brave wife of a dead chieftain who had come alone to welcome his peace delegates. It was a picturesque act which Rhodes delighted to honour, and so he caused a portrait of this wrinkled old negress to be hung in his bedroom—the one woman he chose to remember.

But Africa remembers and honours Rhodes. Yet when the war was over and the Union of South Africa was formed, his own country Rhodesia voted herself out of the federation. Had he lived it might have been otherwise, for in peace and war Rhodes's passion was union under the British flag.

To-day it is not the English but the preponderating Dutch, led by their Boer premier, General Hertzog, who are really in control of the Union of South Africa.

Across the valley from "World's View" one might hear the mocking laugh of fate!



# COLUMBUS BLAZES THE TRAIL TO THE WEST

*By*  
MICHAEL GEELAN

"God hath given me a genius," said Christopher Columbus. He knew that he was a man of destiny. Among the great adventurers of all time he towers as a giant in faith and grit and purpose. The place in history that is his he carved with the steel of his own unbending will.

There were many impediments to his ambitions, plans and dreams. Doubt and reluctance, greed and intrigue in high places conspired for a long time to cheat him of glory. Years of frustration, of heart-breaking delay, of hopes that rose only as quickly to be destroyed, all these had to be suffered and endured before his hour came.

The unexplored Atlantic had beckoned to him with an urge that in time became an ache of insatiable craving for the great adventure. He was resolved that the keel of a ship in his command should plough the green acres of that vast desert of water, blazing a new sea trail westward into the unknown. In his view, this voyage would be the means of completing man's comprehension of the globe.

It is nearly four hundred and fifty years since Columbus set out on his conquest. Time and progress have blunted human appreciation of the Atlantic's majesty. But for the secret places deep down in its fathoms its mystery is gone. Knowledge has dwarfed the threat of unknown terror it held over the human mind. The challenge of its omnipotence has been finally beaten by the ships of the sea and the winged machines of the air. The tempest rages impotently against the ocean greyhounds that in five days take the great sea in their stride. High above them the clippers of the clouds ride both fog, clouds and hurricane, spanning it in less than a day.

To the Europeans of the fifteenth century the Atlantic, before Columbus dared it to the extreme, was a vast, sinister, mysterious realm that was uncharted beyond the Azores. What really lay beyond was a riddle of the age. Legends and fragmentary records

suggest that America was discovered by Vikings from Greenland and Norway almost five centuries before Columbus, but there is no doubt that in the days when he grew to manhood the ocean was generally regarded as unexplored.

Christopher Columbus was born within sound of the sea in 1447, the first son of a cloth weaver of Genoa. It was a romantic setting for the youth of one so sensible to inspiration. To Genoa came treasure ships of the time, laden with gold and silver, silks and laces and tapestries, rare spices and all the precious things that traders—and robbers—had harvested from the glamorous east. The young Columbus would scamper through the narrow streets to the harbour, where he would gaze wide-eyed at the pageant of the quay-side, listening to the magic yarns of the mariners, and returning home to dream his dreams. To ease his teeming imagination he confided his ever-increasing craving for adventure to his brother, Bartholomew, upon whose sympathy, loyalty and support he relied so often in the years to come. "Ten such brothers would not be too many," he wrote.

Young Columbus's dreams were not allowed to lead him into paths of idleness; indeed, he himself was a dynamo of restless energy. He helped his father with his weaving. He studied with both patience and application, though his early education did not carry him much beyond reading, writing, arithmetic and a little drawing.

At fourteen—his father sensing the boy's natural inclinations—he was sent to sea for the first time. During the succeeding years he made many voyages about the Mediterranean; rapidly accumulating a practical knowledge of navigation and the ways of ships and the men who sailed in them.

His curiosity was the birth-pain of his ultimate achievement. He was perpetually hungering for knowledge and hammering on the door of the unknown. Between voyages he devoted every available hour to his education, without which he knew that his practical experience would be worthless, studying what books he could on cosmography, history, astronomy and geometry. He became a splendid draughtsman, skilled in chart-making. It is believed that he even spent a brief period at the university of Pavia, where he obtained a fair knowledge of Latin. This self-made man of the people was leaving as little as possible to chance.

Gradually his great idea took shape and grew. It became both an ideal and an obsession. Columbus dedicated his whole life to its realization. The world in which he lived seemed tantalizingly

incomplete. Trade was being carried on all along the Mediterranean and the northern shores of Africa. Two hundred years before, Marco Polo had discovered the overland route to India and China, and since then those learned men who played with the theory that the world was round had advanced the tentative view that these far countries of the east could also be reached via the Atlantic.

There was nothing tentative about the views of Columbus. He was certain of it. Among his favourite books was the translation of a work by Roger Bacon—still preserved in the library at Seville—which set out to prove that Asia could be reached by sailing westward. His own meticulous calculations convinced him—wrongly, of course, that India was so huge that it stretched far out towards Europe on the other side. A plunge into the unknown beyond the Azores would, he believed, open up a new path to the east.

Before he was thirty Columbus was ready to embark upon his adventure. To his chagrin he discovered that knowledge, courage and a burning enthusiasm were not the only assets required to fit out the necessary expedition. Money was necessary to buy a new world, too! It was the custom in those days for rich and powerful patrons to back any great project in art, science, literature and adventure. And there was no one in Genoa who was prepared to risk a small fortune in gambling on the uncertain wanderings of Columbus—still little more than a boy—in uncharted seas. The alternative to sacrificing his cherished plans was to seek help elsewhere. He decided on Portugal.

There is a fascinating story to the effect that young Columbus had turned pirate, and that in a fight with four Venetian galleys returning from Flanders the buccaneers' vessel was set ablaze by fire-grenades. Columbus is said to have leaped into the sea, climbed on to a raft of drifting wreckage, and eventually to have been washed ashore on the Portuguese coast. It is a pretty legend, but what is more likely is that Columbus arrived in Portugal in a normal way, equipped with a convincing outline of his plans and eager to seek and discover early patronage.

That was in 1474, when Columbus was still only twenty-seven years of age. Long afterwards his own son, Ferdinand, attempted to picture the explorer as he was at that time: "The admiral was well shaped, and of a more than middling stature, long visaged, his cheeks somewhat full, yet neither fat nor lean; he had a hawk nose, his complexion white with a lovely red. In his youth his hair was fair, but when he came to thirty years it all turned grey.

"He was always modest and sparing in his eating and drinking

and his dress. Among strangers he was affable, and pleasant among his domestics, yet with a modesty and easy gravity. He was so strict in religious matters that for fasting and saying all the divine office he might be thought profest in some religious order."

Certainly, from a portrait now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, we can visualize him as tall, handsome and of impressive dignity, with wide, vigorous eyes, clean-cut features and slender, beautiful hands. One can see in him the classic blend of visionary and leader.

It is not surprising that the ten years or so he spent in Portugal wove threads of grey in his hair. In every direction his plans seemed frustrated. In compensation, however, there was his happy marriage to Donna Felipa, the daughter of a dauntless sea-captain who had served under that great explorer, Prince Henry of Portugal (Henry the Navigator, as we learnt at school) and had made many great voyages. Columbus made a careful study of the dead man's charts and journals, and listened enraptured to the stories his mother-in-law told him of her husband's adventures.

Life was not easy for Columbus in Portugal. Dreams were well enough, but he had his living to earn. A certain amount of money was made by the drawing of charts and maps, and this phase of his activities had the added advantage of bringing him closely into touch with all the great Portuguese sailors of the day. He also went to sea at intervals, voyaging as far south as Guinea and as far north as Iceland.

All the time he was seeking a rich and influential patron who would share his faith in the great adventure and furnish an expedition. So industrious and determined was he in this direction that his brother, who had accompanied him to Portugal, was at one time sent to England in an attempt to interest the king of that land in the project. But England was apathetic. Her royalty and nobility had enough trouble at home without seeking more in uncharted seas.

Columbus's final hope, so long as he remained in Portugal, of which he had become a naturalized subject, lay with the new king John II, a ruler who had a decided interest in adventure and exploration. Although John was more concerned with reaching India by way of the south of Africa—a plan that Henry the Navigator had been unable to carry through before his death—he was not unwilling to listen to the more daring and romantic proposition put forward by Columbus.

It can be imagined with what eagerness Columbus pleaded

his case. He placed before the king maps and charts and records. He told him that even Paulo Toscanelli, the most eminent astronomer in Europe, was convinced that India could be reached by crossing the ocean. To add colour and tangibility to his story he mentioned that strange trees and reeds and human bodies of unknown nationality had drifted in from the west on to the shores of the Azores. Doubtless the royal interest was further quickened by talk of the treasure with which he (Columbus) would return.

"Give me ships and give me men. I cannot fail," he declared.

King John was inclined to yield. He turned for advice to his ministers, to the heads of the Church and the professors of medicine who were considered to be the most learned men in his domain. They stroked their beards and wagged their forefingers, and the majority cautioned the king to give the scheme a wide berth.

Not so the cunning and corrupt Bishop of Ceuta, who whispered in the royal ear that the problem could best be solved by sending out a ship in secret to test Columbus's theory. King John, against the dictates of his better nature, assented to the treachery. Columbus was fed on promises and flattery, his brains continually picked, his maps and charts borrowed, while a ship was made ready for the voyage on the course he himself was so unwittingly setting.

When it set sail Nemesis was aboard. The voyage was a failure. West of Cape Verde Islands raging gales were encountered, all thought of finding land across the Atlantic was abandoned, and the ship limped home, the chicken-hearted crew, lacking the leader such an adventure merited, declaring that the whole idea was insane.

It was inevitable that Columbus should hear of the manner in which faith had been broken with him. In spite of the fact that King John again offered to negotiate with him, his anger and distrust were such that he would have nothing further to do with his betrayers. So far as his life's ambition was concerned, ten years of his life had been wasted. He was now no nearer to the conquest of the Atlantic than he had been back in his home port of Genoa.

Yet still the spirit to win through survived. He decided to resort to the radical remedy of leaving Portugal behind him and seeking the favours of fortune in yet another land. Both Portugal and England, by denying him, had lost the potentialities of a new world and France, too, had rejected the plan when it was placed earnestly before that country's ruler by Columbus's brother.

In 1484 he left for Spain, the land that was so soon to see the sunrise of a new and glamorous imperialism, to revel in the spoils

of the new world, to become the richest and the most powerful nation in Europe. He was now a widower, and the care and education of his only son he entrusted to the monks of a friendly monastery.

In the spring of 1485 he began to seek an interview with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who ruled jointly over two separate realms—comprising almost the whole of Spain—which had been united by their marriage. The times were scarcely propitious for such an interview. Spain was engaged in a desperate struggle with the Moors, who had previously played havoc with almost the entire land but were now being driven southward in defeat. But it was a deadly and protracted struggle, with shocking casualties on either side. The queen herself had fought in the field—an indication that she was at least the type of courageous queen from whom Columbus might well expect encouragement.

Columbus was patient. The messages he sent to the king and queen were either lost or ignored. Certainly the royal pair can be forgiven if their thoughts and interests at this time were centred more on the battlefields than on the idea of ships on the unknown mid-Atlantic. There was nothing for Columbus to do but to endure more months of waiting and hoping and dreaming.

In Portugal a pillar of the Church had side-tracked and cheated him. In Spain it was a luminary of the Church who was to befriend and hearten him, to champion his cause and smooth his path to the foot of the throne. This man was Cardinal Mendoza, Archbishop of Toledo, a dignitary of such influence and power that he was often referred to as the "third king of Spain." When Columbus was introduced to the great man their liking and admiration was mutual, and the archbishop cordially promised that the explorer should be granted a royal interview.

It was Queen Isabella to whom Columbus first outlined his plans. Once again, as so often in history, it was a woman's understanding and loyalty that were to mean so much to a man who was the instrument of history and to history itself. The queen was greatly struck by the personality and sincerity of this tall, handsome, quietly-spoken sailor whose soft words nevertheless glowed with such power and idealism. She was fascinated by the word-pictures he drew of the new path to the east. Moreover, she believed in him.

As in Portugal, the matter was referred to the learned men of the Church, presided over by the queen's own confessor, Talavera, a man with profound scholastic background but of so stunted an imagination that he was entirely incapable of grasping either the

spirit or significance of the adventure. The report presented by the committee ridiculed the whole idea, so much so that for a time he became a public joke. It was even suggested that if a ship did succeed in reaching India on his proposed route it would be unable to return as, the world being round, it would have to sail uphill!

With incredible faith Columbus held on. He knew the tide must soon turn in his favour. He was swayed by neither scorn nor neglect. In time he made many valuable contacts among the more enlightened, including the friendship of Diego de Deza, the prior of the great monastery of Salamanca, Spain's greatest seat of culture, and the tutor of a royal prince. The prior interceded on his behalf with the queen, with the result that, although he came no nearer to his goal, a minor position in court circles gave him at least opportunities, not the least of which was his meeting with a charming woman of noble birth who became his second wife.

On two more occasions, thanks to the superb diplomacy of the prior, Columbus was enabled to see the queen and press his case. And, finally, her majesty promised that when the strength of the Moors had been broken and their menace in Spain destroyed she would do all within her power to provide him with an expedition.

Thus, after nearly seventeen years of wandering, of begging and pleading, seventeen years during which his pride and courage and faith and his belief in his destiny had survived doubt, apathy and ridicule as well as treachery, Columbus could at last see hope and opportunity.

It was a great moment, a moment of exaltation, yet Columbus did not stir from that calm, passive dignity that had adorned his character through the years, except, perhaps, that his head was higher and his eyes brighter with the fever of adventure-lust.

He was grateful to the queen and to Spain. He felt honoured. But he demanded that the terms on which he was prepared to make the voyage of discovery should be conceded in full without compromise. He demanded that he should hold the rank of high admiral in all the lands and seas he might discover; that in such lands he should have the authority and titles of governor and viceroy; that one-tenth of the precious metals and productions of such lands should accrue to him; that he should be the sole judge of trade disputes; that in any future expeditions he should receive one-eighth of the profits in return for contributing one-eighth of the expenses.

In the light of his years of study and waiting, of his enterprise

and the risks he was taking, and of the riches and glory success would bring to Spain, his demands were logical and moderate. The queen willingly agreed.

Then fell the most staggering blow of all. The queen's council of advisers, while not entirely boycotting the adventure, threw up their hands in alarm at the nature of his terms, which they considered to be wild, arrogant and impossible. Spain, they declared, could never invest an eccentric and foreign adventurer with such powers. It was, in its way, an admission of their growing belief that Columbus might succeed, that his dreams were very near to realities.

Believing that rather than see his now blossoming plans broken Columbus would agree to a drastic compromise, the council were mildly shocked, and several of its members sincerely disappointed when the explorer bowed to their decision, made no protest, exhibited no outward perturbation, but simply prepared to leave the country.

His last hope was France, where overtures on his behalf had already been a failure. Heart-sick, but still strong in the faith within him, once again a wandering genius, he set out alone on mule-back on his journey. The picture of that proud, courageous, saddened figure plodding his way in loneliness and grief to yet another land, beginning yet another chapter in his chequered story, brings an ache to the heart even now. The intensity of the tragedy is as poignant as the stage of history can show.

It was in that pitiful moment that the clouds broke. Destiny repented of its constant torture of this noble man and healed his wounds with the radiance of golden opportunity. Fast on his trail rode a queen's messenger, and six miles from the city he had left behind him, as he thought, for ever, he received the tidings that he was to sail the Atlantic after all.

It was an immortal moment.

Disgusted with the studied obstruction and lack of vision on the part of her advisers, the queen had given them a womanly as well as a royal brow-beating. Their advice and their decision was hurled back into their surprised faces. Columbus she declared, was no impecunious adventurer intent only on feathering his own nest, but a great and wise man whose achievements would widen the known world and bring glory to Spain. No other land should steal him from her. She herself would find the money for the epic voyage.

All credit to this enlightened queen with a head for progress



and a heart for romance. She did find the money. At first she had contemplated selling her jewels—a woman's trinkets in exchange for a new world!—but eventually sufficient funds were raised by the negotiation of loans. Columbus's terms were signed and sealed in their entirety on April 17, 1492.

The adventure that perhaps did more than any other to change the world was at hand. Thousands of miles away, across the unknown sea, the trees stirred in the tropical night. Columbus was coming!

His plans were laid with speed and precision. Not for nothing had he spent these long years in scheming and meditation. So far as his family was concerned, their comfort and security during his absence was quickly arranged. A son by his second wife was left with his mother. Through the queen's kindness his elder boy became a page to a royal prince. His mind immune from any anxiety on their behalf, Columbus dedicated heart and nerve and sinew to his life's ambition.

On August 2, 1492—just four hundred and forty-five years ago, and four hundred and twenty-seven before Sir John Alcock and Sir Arthur Whitten-Brown flew it for the first time—Columbus set out across the Atlantic. Contrasted with the wonder ships of modern days, it was a pathetic, pygmy fleet that stole timidly out of the port of Palos to battle with the shifting and threatening waters of the ocean.

So clumsy, and yet so frail, were the three vessels comprising that fleet that if their like were seen today in the Thames one would be apprehensive of their fate if, venturing down-river, they were caught in the teeth of a gale even before they had reached the open sea.

Columbus's flagship, the *Santa Maria*, was a three-decker of one hundred tons, only ninety feet long, and with a beam of twenty feet. It seems incredible that the two remaining ships were decked only fore and aft, being completely open in the centre. The *Pinta* was only half the size of the *Santa Maria*, and the little *Nina* of but forty tons, although she turned out to be the most dependable and seaworthy craft of the three.

The members of the expedition received the Holy Sacrament before embarking, and an atmosphere of gloom and foreboding pervaded the entire port. As the little ships faded on the sky-line far out to sea sorrowing relatives and friends of many of the mariners resigned themselves to the fact that they would never again see them alive.

A similar feeling of fatality was rampant among the ships' crews. They were candidly afraid and openly hostile to the whole idea of the voyage. To these rough and ignorant sailors, unedified in even the rudiments of geography, it was as though they were sailing towards the very edge of the world, to be hurled to their doom over that watery precipice. To make matters worse, few if any of the rank and file were volunteers. They had been carried aboard by the brute force of the press-gangs; some had been snatched from the dungeons of prisons.

Columbus, they declared, was a madman—a fanatical adventurer whose plans for this escapade had been scorned by many of the nations of Europe. Only a woman—and their opinion of Queen Isabella was a vivid diatribe—could have been won over by this soft-spoken son of suicide.

The entire expedition numbered less than a hundred men. Among them was an Englishman and an Irishman. But there were only a few whom Columbus could trust, including the redoubtable Martin Alonzo Pinzon and his brother, Vincente, commanding the two smaller vessels, and Garcia Fernandez, a doctor.

Once past the Canary Islands, with no chart save the theoretical one of Columbus to guide them, in unknown waters sailing towards unknown perils, the fear and anger of the men mounted to the point of mutiny. It was even planned to seize Columbus and throw him overboard in the night. Warned in time, the explorer exhibited amazing dexterity of leadership, quietening the men by means of a variety of subterfuges. He used, first, the charm of his personality and the power of religion. Between the two he induced them, for the time being at any rate, to have confidence in his knowledge and skill, and to believe that the voyage had divine guidance. Further to subdue their fears he kept a double set of reckonings of the ships' progress. The first, for the use of himself and those he could trust, was an accurate one. The second, at the disposal of the men, gave much less than the actual distance sailed. For the danger was, not that the men might think they were voyaging too slowly, but that they had gone too far without sighting land.

Columbus sincerely believed that he would soon sight Japan. And probably he himself would have been willing to turn back if he had known that Japan was some twelve thousand miles away instead of the two thousand he himself had estimated.

One thing he must certainly have realized with the humblest member of the fleet—that if they did fail to find land after crossing

vast, unknown stretches of the ocean, their return would be a tragedy. In the fifteenth century, of course, there were no canned provisions and no cold storage. What little food remained would turn bad, only rain caught in the sails would provide them with fresh water, and disease and death would come aboard to pilot them to a sorry fate.

But the admiral of the Atlantic chased away such sombre conjectures. His poise and confidence and courage were unshaken. On and on they sailed westward, amid the relentless monotony of sea and sky, broken only by wheeling squadrons of gulls and gannets. They sighted the Sargasso, the ocean cross-currents which whip vast, floating masses of seaweed into a sinister whirlpool. Man saw it now for the first time.

On. Westward, always westward, the sun rising and setting on the solitude of a sea that spared them the fury of tempest but mocked them day by day with its enigmatical dimensions and tantalized them with its unbroken horizon. To the man who first sighted land the queen had promised a rich reward. Few now hoped ever to earn it.

One remarkable feature of the voyage in mid-Atlantic was the strength and constancy of the following wind. It would have driven the little fleet along if scarcely a sail had been set. If Columbus believed it to have been heaven-sent, his men were convinced that it was the servant of the devil. Many openly protested that it would never change its direction, and that a return to Spain would be impossible. There was again a rumbling under-current of mutinous talk. Columbus looked the men straight in the eyes and quelled their fears and resentment by the sheer strength of his personality. "I will reach the Indies by the help of God."

For a few days they were becalmed. The men seized the opportunity to demand that Columbus should turn about. Even the ships' officers suggested, with a blush of shame in their faces, that it might be as well. But Columbus was adamant. He refused to deviate an inch from his course. He dared the anger, threats and conspiracy of them all. Westward they must go.

After nearly a month at sea there was a thrill that stirred the hearts and hopes of every man. "Land ho! The reward is mine!" It was the ecstatic voice of Martin Alonso Pinzon. There, to the south-west, a blur against the sky-line, all eyes could see what everyone believed to be land. On the three ships there was a carnival of joy and emotion. Columbus himself knelt on the

deck of the *Santa Maria* and offered up thanks to God. The night fell and curtained their discovery from view, but the ships' course was at once altered and they cleaved their way through the darkness towards the haven they believed they had won.

Dawn brought an agony of disillusionment. There was no sign of land. A mirage had deceived them. They had hitched their hopes to a cloud. The incident brewed more discontent than ever. Once again Columbus was faced with open mutiny. Once again he subdued it with amazing strategy. Back again on the original course went the ships. Westward again, always westward.

By early October—three months after leaving Spain—they had covered over two thousand two hundred and fifty miles and were well in the region where Columbus had anticipated finding Japan, or Cipango as it was then known. He was bitterly disappointed. He was puzzled. The wonder is that he did not at last despair of achieving his objective and lose faith in his theories. On the contrary, this amazing man decided to forge right ahead. Somewhere, he still believed, the Atlantic must end.

Just when it seemed that it would be no longer possible to hold the fury and violence of his discontented men in check, providence intervened to send a message of hope and promise. The sea itself spoke with a silent voice. The berried branch of some strange tree floated past. Rock-fish swam around. Cut sticks were picked up. And, to add to these happy auguries, tiny birds, too frail and gentle to fly far from land, winged and sang overhead.

The mood of the expedition changed as if by magic. Where there had been bitterness and fear there was now smiling anticipation. For the first time since the voyage began the ships' companies approached to some extent near the brotherhood of the sea. Columbus celebrated that wonderful October evening by calling his men to prayer. Hymns were sung fervently. The admiral announced that he was now certain that land would be sighted within a few hours. God, he said, had blessed their enterprise. Triumph would soon be theirs. They would win glory, and Spain greatness. He was proud of them, he lied with an easy conscience.

They were again reminded of the queen's promise of a rich reward for the first man to sight land—a pension of thirty crowns a year. Actually this prize was eventually embraced in the awards made to Columbus himself. But it was lively bait in the Atlantic, and he made the most of it.

The night was electric with drama. None slept. All eyes were straining through the darkness. Columbus himself was as vigilant

as any; not for a single moment did he leave the deck. Approaching now was the hour of which he had dreamed, the hour for which he had studied, suffered, wandered across the face of Europe, knelt in homage before great rulers, had been humbled and betrayed, had dared the wrath of an unknown sea, had silenced and destroyed mutiny, had played a lone hand against the world.

The boy who had seen visions as he sat on the quayside at Genoa was now a man on the high road to fifty, his hair was already white, his fine features bearing the indelible lines that the harassing years had traced over them. But those visions were now on the eve of being realities. It had been worth it. It had been worth every cruel, crippling minute. Not because of the power and the glory of it was he elated, not because of material things did his heart sing with the rhythm of triumph. He was about to widen the known world, to enhance the prestige of a throne, to bring riches and greatness to a nation, to give man the freedom of the unknown ocean. That was victory and renown. Greater still, though, in the fine mind of this man was the fact that in the face of years of relentless adversity he had been true to his destiny.

Suddenly, in the still watches of that night, Columbus trembled with an almost overpowering emotion. Far ahead of him he saw a twinkling light. It faded and was gone again, only to reappear with greater and reassuring luminance. It was as though a star had risen to signal his success, to guide him to his promised land.

Columbus reset the course of his little fleet towards it. The *Pinta* being the fastest and most versatile of his vessels, was sent ahead. Just after two o'clock in the morning on October 11, 1492, a boom of cannon from the distance signalled that the *Pinta* had discovered land. Then, six miles out, the fleet furled sails to await the momentous daybreak.

Columbus had voyaged three thousand miles since leaving the Canaries. He now believed that he had reached Japan, from which country he would sail to China and India, completing his plans to the letter. Not yet was he to know that Asia still lay far beyond, and that he had discovered a new world.

Dawn had scarcely risen when Columbus went ashore, carrying the royal standard of Spain. The spot where he first set foot was Watling Island in the Bahamas. Throwing himself to the ground, the admiral kissed the precious soil of this child of his discovery. Prayers were offered, then he gave the place the name of San Salvador and took possession in the name of the king and queen.

The men who, twenty-four hours ago, would have taken his

life without regret, who regarded him as nothing more than a crank, were now in a seventh heaven of delight. They danced around him and kissed his hand. They promised everlasting obedience and loyalty. They were intoxicated by the gentle, balmy air, by the green luxuriance of their surroundings, by their freedom to kick and walk and run on solid earth again.

For some months the adventurers cruised among the islands, studying the natives and their customs, bartering, seeking gold, taking aboard strange fruits and curios. The islanders, to his surprise, were a handsome and intelligent breed, friendly, courteous and unsuspecting. They did not know the value of what little gold they used as ornaments. When shown a sword they laughingly touched its naked edge. Iron was new to them. The shining armour of the Spaniards, who had anticipated resistance, fascinated and delighted them. Their huts were orderly and clean. They had fine canoes, many of them so large that they carried nearly eighty men. A fine, peace-loving, happy, gentle people, to whom the future was to bring their meed of the misery of "civilization." They believed that the white men had descended from heaven!

Columbus now assumed that these islands lay off the coast of India. It was for that reason that he called them the Indies, a name that lingers on to this day. The largest of the group he believed to be Japan. Many of the islands he named after members of the Spanish royal family. Cuba, which was his next great discovery, he called Juan. "It is the most beautiful island that the eyes ever beheld; full of excellent ports and profound rivers," he wrote.

The admiral went on to add the islands of Hayti and Long Island, among others, to his conquests. At Hayti the first real disaster of the expedition overtook him. A blunder on the part of a helmsman resulted in the flagship, the *Santa Maria*, running aground so badly that there was no alternative but to unload and transfer her cargo, and then to abandon her. No lives were lost, but there remained the problem of surplus crew. Columbus was not puzzled for long. Here, he decided, was his opportunity to found a settlement, which he did, nearly a dozen men, including the Englishman and the Irishman, volunteering to remain. A fort was built with timbers from the *Santa Maria*, thus the immortal flagship became the foundation of the new world.

Now another problem confronted the admiral on the eve of his return to Spain. The *Pinta* was lost. Rather than search or wait for many months Columbus decided to go back across the Atlantic alone in the tiny *Nina*, the baby of his fleet. Later he picked

up once more with the *Pinta*, but she was quickly lost again, this time for the remainder of the voyage.

And what a voyage it was, too. Aboard the *Nina* there was peace and understanding. The men were obedient and subdued, for Columbus had generously promised even the worst of them that they were forgiven for their cowardice and mutinous conduct on the outward voyage, and that nothing more would be heard of the matter. But the sea, which on the way out had been docile and friendly, now rebelled. The *Nina* found itself at the mercy of a titanic storm. It was a miracle that the great explorer ever returned to Spain to tell his story. The wind reached hurricane force. Mountainous seas rose. The little cockle-shell of a ship, with its open well deck, was given a devastating pounding. All that they could do was to let the vessel run before the storm. Terror stalked among the crew—among the six Indians whom Columbus was taking home to present to the king and queen.

But Columbus and the men threw themselves upon the mercy of the Deity. They vowed together that, if God preserved them, they would march naked except for their shirts to the first available shrine on land and offer up their thanks. For the first time Columbus must have lost faith in his star. He enclosed his record of the voyage in a water-tight cask and pitched it overboard in the hope that the world would thus learn of his discoveries.

But the ship survived. The simple expedient of filling empty casks with sea water, for use as ballast in the hold, steadied and saved her. At the Azores they refitted and took aboard stores. More foul weather drove them to seek shelter in Portugal where, ironically enough, Columbus was summoned to the court of King John. With what bitterness and regret must the king who had rejected the explorer's overtures so many years before have heard of the triumph of the expedition and of the glory he had lost to Spain.

The *Nina* reached the port of Palos—from whence she had sailed—on March 15, 1493. He who had been ridiculed and scorned was given the welcome of a king. Reflecting his glory was the bunch of weaklings and ex-convicts whom the press-gangs had forced into the most memorable voyage in history. From Barcelona, the seat of the royal court, came messages of congratulation from King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella—addressing him as both admiral and viceroy and paying such burning compliments that the parchment crackled. He was also invited to the royal presence.

His progress through Barcelona in early April was a memorable and colourful pageant. The streets were thronged with clamouring

and excited admirers. They threw flowers at his feet. Behind him in the procession came his sun-bronzed seamen, carrying green and scarlet parrots, giant lizards and tropical plants and fruits. With them, dazed and scared, though with a great dignity, marched the six Indians in all their vivid finery. That little cavalcade through Barcelona was a thrill and a revelation that is unrivalled in history.

The king and queen rose from their thrones when he appeared before them. It was an undreamt of honour for a commoner. The court bowed low to this man of a foreign people who had brought to Spain such glory and renown. Time and time again, from that moment forward, the royal pair listened spellbound to his story. His many titles and privileges, as admiral, governor and viceroy, were confirmed, he was granted a coat-of-arms and promised as many more expeditions as he pleased. From Spain the news of his spectacular triumph spread through the known world. Whatever happened now, none could rob him of immortality. He himself was happy in discovering the path to the west.

Columbus made three more voyages of discovery to the new world. On the first of these, in September 1493, and with seventeen ships and one thousand five hundred men, he added Dominica, Montserrat, Antigua, San Martin, Santa Cruz and the Virgin Islands to the domains of Spain. He also explored Porto Rico. On the next, in 1498, he looked for the first time upon the mainland of South America, unaware that he had discovered a continent.

But his power was waning. At home his enemies were plotting against him. In the colonies he had founded, the greed for gold and plunder was stirring up strife; his authority had been undermined by others. So much so, indeed, that his return from his third voyage was an ignominious one. A false charge was laid against him, and he was shipped back to Europe in chains.

Although Columbus was vindicated and his honour restored, this blow to his prestige, this fearful ingratitude of the world for which he had won so much, this deception of the Spaniards whose land he had enriched and honoured, had stabbed at his vitality. He made just one more voyage—in 1502—in a vain quest for the non-existent passage to Asia (later to come about by means of the man-made Panama Canal).

In September, 1504, he returned finally to Spain, tired, ill, heart-sick, reconciled to the fact that his work was done, although he was never to know the immensity of his achievements. On May 20, 1506, he died. But the flame of the genius he declared that God had given him burns steadily down through the years.



# A LIFE FOR THE LIVING DEAD

By

F. WATERS

**L**EPROSY! The word has a sinister meaning even for those who have an imperfect understanding of the sheer horror of the disease. To give full honour to the man about whom this story centres it is necessary to realize fully exactly what sort of life he chose, of his own free will, to live. If you are willing to face the horrors he faced day by day think of the picture of a little leper child.

The scene is a dirty little hut and in the corner is something largely covered by a blanket. One edge of the blanket is raised cautiously; a breathing object lies beneath; a face, a human face, turns slowly towards us; a face on which scarcely a trace of humanity remains! The dark skin is puffed up and blackened, a kind of moss, gummy, and glistening, covers it; the muscles of the mouth are contracted and lay bare the grinning teeth; the thickened tongue lies like a fig between them; the eyelids are curled tightly back, exposing the inner surface, and the protruding eyeballs, now shapeless and broken, look not unlike burst grapes.

That is only one of innumerable examples that could be found on the beautiful Hawaiian Islands in the latter half of the last century. Many Englishmen may know these islands better as the Sandwich Islands, discovered by Captain Cook in 1778, and where he was murdered by the inhabitants a year later. But few Englishmen—or any white men—had reason to be proud of their influence during the hundred years that succeeded the discovery. All the evils of the white man's civilization seemed to find their way there with very little to balance them, and probably the most terrible import was leprosy.

Isolated cases had been noticed before 1850, but in 1863 a surgeon found it necessary to call the attention of the government to the fact that the disease was spreading in an alarming degree. In consequence, an official enquiry was made, and by 1865 the influential white section of the population had forced legislation through, designed to cope with this terror that threatened all and sundry. The chief feature of the relevant act was that land was to be bought for a leper colony and that all victims should be

irrevocably isolated on it. The site eventually chosen was on the island of Molokai, the fifth largest of the eight principal islands that make up the Hawaiian group. A sparsely populated island of some two hundred and fifty square miles, it possessed a small peninsula on its northern side three miles square and cut off from the rest of the island by formidable perpendicular cliffs, from two to four thousand feet high.

The authorities were very satisfied with their choice. With the sea and unclimbable cliffs for their barriers the lepers would be safely confined. Though this action of the officials is open to criticism, it must be conceded that the scenery is magnificent and, best of all, there was a particularly fertile valley which the lepers could cultivate and thus become an independent and self-supporting community.

A superintendent was appointed and progress was watched for a few months. The authorities were annoyed to find as time passed that their plans were not being carried out. They realized, of course, that a leper is not exactly in the best of health and they had heard tales of limbs, fingers and toes rotting until they either fell off or were hacked off by the owner. Nevertheless to the officials it seemed sheer obstinacy that prevented these creatures from efficiently tilling the soil. Within a few months indeed, the rich and fertile land had disappeared beneath a growth of weeds. Furthermore it appeared that the stronger lepers stole from the weaker ones; that although they did not till the soil, they brewed a fiery beer from the root of a wild plant; and that altogether the life at Kalawao was developing into one long orgy of licentiousness and vice.

Successive superintendents did venture to mention a few of the disadvantages of the colony. In the absence of a doctor or any hospital service, dying lepers rotted away on grass mats in huts which failed to keep out rain and wind; a meagre water supply had to be fetched from a spot nearly a mile away; adequate clothing and food was only secured by a few of the slightly tainted victims.

Unfortunately, the evil reputation of the settlement spread to the other islands. Lepers refused to report themselves and their families hid them, so that the law ultimately became openly disregarded. In 1873, however, a new king decided to enliven matters. He recognized the necessity of an adequate hospital service and put a white leper in charge on the strength of his having dabbled in medicine at some time of his life. He had water pipes laid nearer to the settlement, and even if the water supply

occasionally dried up, the best of intentions were obvious. Having demonstrated the latter successfully to himself, the king decided to organize armed round-ups of lepers and was so successful that there were soon nearly eight hundred people in the colony.

These eight hundred still lived in the grass and mud huts (with ample natural ventilation), food, water and clothing were uncertain for all except the strongest; and the hospital was largely ignored as the perverse creatures mocked the facilities and preferred to die outside completely indifferent as to how they were buried, if at all. The average length of life was, in fact, three or four years from arrival at Kalawao, and the lepers ill-concealed an inclination to cram as much gaiety into their lives as their beer could inspire.

When one considers what the doomed colonists owed to the outside world, it is not surprising to realize their utter despair, misery, and distrust of outsiders. To this place they had been sent to die; to die with absolute certainty and in circumstances that were worse than any animal is normally expected to endure. They must have wondered why the authorities took any measures at all to prolong their lives, so futile were these measures. They probably bitterly reflected that it was merely a question of quietening consciences which had been forcibly stirred by the constant sight of a shipload of lepers sailing from Honolulu. And they would have been right.

But in spite of their hatred of the outside world they crowded down to the beach whenever a ship anchored off the island. A rowing boat would then draw close to the shore, deposit whatever stores it had brought and hurriedly withdraw. Thus, one early morning in May, 1873, when the usual boat dropped its anchor, several score of the colonists dragged their mutilated bodies down to the water's edge and gazed curiously at a "cargo" of fifty lepers that was being unloaded. And as they looked with their poor, half-blind, sore eyes, their curiosity was rewarded with a surprise.

In addition to the lepers two other figures were jumping out of the rowing boat. They were attired in long black robes and wore quaint flat hats. The lepers had occasionally seen such men, for until a short time ago a Catholic priest paid brief visits to the little band of Catholic lepers. But one of the new king's reforms had been to prohibit non-lepers from visiting the island: all who landed stayed for life. What then was the nature of these two priests' mission. It was obvious that they were not lepers. One was elderly and his bearing suggested authority, while the other was a magnificently built young man of about thirty years of age.

The horribly disfigured band crowded round the two and gazed intently at them, who returned the gaze with sad, yet curiously determined eyes. Then the elder priest spoke:

"So far, my children, you have been left alone and uncared for. But you shall be so no longer. Behold, I have brought you one who will be a father to you, and who loves you so much that for your welfare and for the sake of your immortal souls, he does not hesitate to become one of you, to live and die with you."

Strange words these, to most of the lepers. They looked incredulously at the young man, who had brought no luggage. They silently watched the elder priest retire to the boat and then dragged themselves after the other who walked slowly to the settlement huts surrounded by a few Catholic lepers.

The first strange day drew to its close for the new member of the colony who looked round for his resting-place. Standing by the side of the little wooden Catholic chapel his eye alighted on a friendly-looking *puhala* tree and in the shade of its foliage he lay on the bare ground. As he slumbered on, curious pairs of eyes, like those of wild animals, peered through the gloom at the unusual sight. The lepers had found a new diversion.

The eyes disappeared. Darkness, sleep, suffering and death reigned over Kalawao—the living graveyard.

The course of Father Damien de Veuster's life was determined by two major events, both highly dramatic, but that he would enter the service of the Church had always appeared inevitable, in spite of the fact that he was a strong, athletic boy, a skater of championship class, and destined for a commercial career by his parents—Flemish farmers. He had long shown a disposition for the religious life and it came as no surprise to his parents that their own plans had to be laid aside, and that their son should enter the same religious order as that of his elder brother.

Father Damien was christened Joseph and only took the name of Damien when he entered the establishment of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, commonly known as the Picpus Fathers. One of the special functions of the fathers was to evangelize the heathen and they had been particularly commissioned by the Pope to look after the Hawaiian Islands. At long intervals a small number of priests were selected to sail to the islands, and in 1863 came the news that another little band had been chosen. Among them was Father Damien's elder brother, and great was the young man's boyish envy. He had set his heart on such an adventure, and another chance was not likely to occur

for several years, if ever, for him who would not be ordained a priest for some years in the normal course of events.

But at this moment other powers were at work. Damien's brother was stricken down with fever and rendered unable to stand the rough voyage. His place had to be filled, and Damien realized that he would receive little consideration from his superior in view of the paucity of his qualifications and junior position. But with that determination which was to characterize his whole life Damien quickly evolved a daring plan. He would ignore his own superior and write direct to the superior general of his Order! This was rank insubordination and, in a sense, indefensible. Nevertheless, mused Damien, he could surely only receive a stern rebuke and it seemed worth the risk.

Anxious days passed and then one morning his superior approached him in the coldest and severest manner that Damien had imagined. He hardly dared to look his superior in the face as he waited to hear the crushing rebuke.

"It is rather foolish for you to want to go before you are a priest, but you have your wish. You are to go!"

Damien looked incredulous and, then, as his superior turned on his heel, he paused for a moment and burst into an exhibition of youthful enthusiasm that shocked his colleagues. Round and round the quiet passages he romped, telling all and sundry the news.

Thus on November 1, 1863, at the age of twenty-two, he sailed from Europe never to return alive.

For nearly ten years he worked hard in the Hawaiian Islands, one of his proudest boasts being that he erected one chapel or church every year of his stay. In May, 1873, a Catholic church was to be consecrated on the island of Maui, and Damien, his bishop and several other priests were present at the ceremony, and it was then that occurred the second turning-point in Damien's career.

The authorities had recently forbidden any non-leper to make visits to the settlement on Molokai. This meant therefore that no Catholic priest would be able to pay his periodic calls, and the bishop addressed the assembled priests on the subject. He then asked for suggestions.

All those present perceived that there was only one solution to the problem—for a priest to sacrifice his life and prepare for the awful fate that would inevitably overtake him. Almost immediately four stood up and offered themselves—Damien and three young and new missionaries.

Damien was to brook no competition however. He pointed out

that his experience was essential for the job and that, in fact, the bishop *must* select him.

The bishop looked at him with tears in his eyes. He recalled the excellent record of the young man before him. He knew him to be in perfect physical condition, one who had amazed the natives by prodigious feats of endurance and courage. And as he spoke the words sending him to what the Egyptians called "death before death" the bishop's voice was distorted with emotion:

"This employment is of such a nature that I would not have imposed it on anyone, but I gladly accept your offer."

The bishop and Father Damien left two hours later for Honolulu; thence for Molokai.

The first day on the Molokai settlement was spent by Father Damien in thoroughly exploring every corner of his new parish. The priest was astounded to find that of the eight hundred lepers in the settlement no less than eighty per cent were grievously ill and dying. Practically all, except the little band that had welcomed him, were lying prostrate on their sleeping mats in damp grass huts. Their clothing consisted largely of damp rags—not so much from the rains as from their broken sores—and food and water was rarely seen. As for the unbearable odour arising from such conditions, coupled with the non-existence of sanitation, one's imagination quails before it. Father Damien admitted that for some time he often became so overwhelmed with nausea that he would find it necessary to interrupt a visit by closing his nostrils and running outside for fresh air. To overcome this "weakness" he began smoking a pipe and he was glad to find that not only did this assist him to fulfil his duties without interruption but that the smell of tobacco counteracted that which would otherwise have clung to his clothing.

As he went about his unsavoury visits the sights were such as almost to unnerve him and we can only dimly imagine what his thoughts were as he lay down to sleep under his *puhala* tree after the following visit to a dying Catholic who had asked for the last rites of the Church. It was part of Damien's religious duty to anoint the lepers' ears, eyes, nose and feet with a holy oil, and having attended to the first three he turned to the last. Now Damien knew this leper's legs to be paralysed; yet when he looked at the feet he found them to be moving slightly. He looked closer and then saw the movement was caused by worms! Such things were to become common experiences for the priest.

A more disconcerting factor for him was the resentment and

indifference displayed towards him by the non-Catholic majority of the lepers. But as he reflected he came to the conclusion that this was not unnatural. The Hawaiians knew they had to thank the white men for their troubles, and visitors so far had come to exhibit either morbid curiosity or heartless officialdom. Besides it was probably too much for their imagination to conceive anybody who would sacrifice his life in such a way.

For the benefit of such people Damien came to another significant conclusion. He would enter into their life in such an intimate and practical way as to leave no doubt in their minds as to his sincerity. Afterwards he was to be accused of carelessness, uncleanness and rashness because of this, but if his purpose is remembered his actions can be understood. To convince the lepers that he did not fear the disease he would share their food, cups, and eating utensils; he would let them smoke his pipe, lie on his bed, try on his clothes and he mingled with them with the ease and assurance of another leper; he became the doctor of the island, and made it his duty to wash the sores of any who were too ill to do so themselves.

His practical sense played a great part. He quickly demanded from the authorities a better water supply, and when the most that they would do was to dump some pipes on the island, he himself, assisted by a little band of fairly strong lepers, evolved and constructed a perfectly satisfactory system. When a great storm arose and destroyed most of the wretched grass huts he himself travelled to Honolulu and demanded new ones which would consist of wood. The president of the Board of Health curtly told him that if he showed himself again outside the settlement he would have him arrested and punished like any other! But Damien had made his point, and in due course he was supervising the construction of the improved dwellings (it is estimated that he himself personally assisted in the erection of over three hundred). Gardens were encouraged by him, and the hospital was transformed from a mortuary into something more worthy of its name.

A favourite hobby of Damien's was coffin making. His faith advocated respect for the human body and Damien could not bear to see the bodies thrown from their mats into a rough hole. It is estimated that he constructed one thousand coffins during his life at Molokai, and in addition he personally supervised the burial of each leper. Gradually the whole-hearted service that he gave to the colony had its effect. All, save a very few, became devoted to him.

His last and greatest task was to improve their morals. Four factors induced the lepers to abandon all sexual restraint—they were mostly unmarried; they had a horrible death reserved for them in the near future; leprosy, like some other diseases, has frequently a strong aphrodisiacal effect; and, finally, the powerful liquor distilled from the plant called *Ki*. But such was Damien's force of character that only a small minority were ultimately habitual evil-livers.

His life at Molokai is characterized by an almost frenzied vigour, and we may ascribe this with confidence to the fact that he daily expected to become a leper. Six months after he had arrived he wrote to his brother in Belgium marvelling that he had not yet contracted the disease. But in spite of his alleged carelessness and uncleanness ten years rolled by and he remained healthy. Damien devoutly records: "I consider this shows the special protection of our good God and the Blessed Virgin Mary."

By this time the news of the strange happenings in the South Seas had been carried to numerous parts of the world. Donations and gifts arrived frequently and Damien was happy in the knowledge that the most difficult part of his mission was successfully completed. The same daily round continued of celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, anointing the dying, burying the dead, washing the hospital patients, constructing coffins and repairing homes—but his "dear lepers" were assured of their place in the sun.

It can be imagined how the poor creatures loved the splendid pageantry of Damien's Church and how they looked forward to the inspiration of his addresses each Sunday. He used to preface his sermons with "*Brethren . . .*" and it was a dumbfounded flock that heard him change this opening one Sunday morning early in 1885. On this occasion he began: "*We lepers . . .*"

It is impossible to determine when Father Damien contracted the disease. He believed that the first signs were definitely visible so far back as 1876 (three years after he had arrived). But in his circumstances he would be apt to imagine the worst because of the slightest rash, eruption or pain and he had more than enough cause to be over-suspicious. His case was difficult to diagnose in that he was first afflicted by the anæsthetic form of leprosy which deadens the nerves but does not cause disfigurement. A doctor feared that something serious was amiss in 1884 when he found that the nerves of the knees were affected. The classic story of the confirmation of Damien's suspicions is as follows.

He was shaving one morning when he upset the cup of scalding



water over his foot. The foot was badly blistered but not the slightest pain was felt. It was following this incident that Damien began to speak of "*we lepers*" and "*the other lepers.*"

He was now a man of forty-five and the disease quickly began to take its normal course of disfiguration. His left ear began to swell to a great size, his eyebrows fell out and parts of his body including his left cheek was invaded by revolting sores. But he who had so long expected the inevitable was less affected in spirit than anyone else. He even found contentment in the thought that at last he had been found worthy of a martyr's death. When he was sent to the mainland to try a new cure, he was so depressed by the attentions he received that they had to discharge him within a few weeks and confess that it was worse than useless to prolong the course.

It so happened that in these last stages he was to be assisted on the settlement by a remarkable American—Ira Dutton, who quickly became known as Brother Joseph. This man had been a dashing and impressive officer in the Civil War, had temporarily lapsed into wild living and then became converted to Catholicism. He was three years younger than Damien and at the age of forty-three had travelled to Molokai and offered his services to Damien. The latter liked the look of this strong and determined ex-officer and entered into a profound and whole-hearted friendship.

It was to him, rather than to any priest-colleague that Damien began to delegate the work for which he was fast becoming unfitted. Dutton made a brave beginning in the hospital and took over the washing and care of those lepers who had been brought there when unable to look after themselves. Then he pleased Damien by making himself responsible for the orphanage that he had had to organize, and in time bore the brunt of all Damien's duties save those belonging to the office of priest.

In the meantime Damien continued to celebrate Mass day by day with great difficulty, insisted on making his long and tiring visits round the settlement and supervised the erection of a new chapel and extensions to the hospital and orphanage. In answer to some well meaning person he said: "Rest! It's no time to rest now, where there is so much to do and my time is so short!"

But in 1888 he was able to enjoy what seemed to him an invasion of helpers. First arrived another Belgian, Father Conrardy, whom Damien had persuaded the bishop to appoint as his assistant. But Conrardy was new to the isles and his appointment aroused a storm of protest from all the other priests in the diocese. Why couldn't

one of *them* be allowed to minister to the lepers and risk Damien's fate? Astounded by this remarkable protest the bishop consented to choose another from among them, and in due course a Father Moellers arrived. Next came the tall Irishman, Brother James, who had sailed from Australia to offer his services and, finally, arrived three nuns from Honolulu—Mother Marianne and Sisters Vincent McCormick and Leopoldina Burns. They arrived in November 1888 to take care of a home for girls and young women of the island, and also to assist in the general medical care of the lepers.

Thus, when Damien began to prepare for his death as he passed his forty-ninth birthday in the following January, he was able to contemplate the future of the settlement with peace of mind. By the beginning of March his hands were so sore infested and eaten away that he could no longer celebrate Mass, and on March 28 he took to his bed never to rise again. A few days later he received the last rites of his faith, while the outside world waited in suspense for the daily expected news.

Easter fell late that year and Damien had expressed a hope that he might celebrate the Church's greatest festival in the world beyond. His wish was granted. On April 15, 1889, he lay pressing the hands of those who stood near him when, with a little smile, he relaxed the feeble grasp. Father Damien had passed away from his dear lepers who, at that moment, crowded round the little dwelling in the deepest reverence and sorrow.

He was buried in the spot he had himself selected—under the shade of the tree that had been his sole shelter when he had first arrived on the island. The monument over the grave recorded on one side "Father Damien"; and on the other "Damien Deveuster."

On January 27, 1936, Damien's body was removed from his humble grave at Kalawao and with all the military and episcopal pomp due to one whose fame would last for all time he found his way to his native land via San Francisco and Panama. At Antwerp the King of the Belgians and the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines stood waiting to pay their homage to him who was hailed as *Valiant Soldier of Christ, Salvation of Molokai, Honour of Belgium, Glory of the Church, Radiance of God*.

His Church has not yet raised him to the ranks of its saints, for that is dependent on many factors besides heroism and martyrdom and demands long and very critical consideration. But it is good to know that his claims are being examined and it is to be hoped that he will be found worthy of this supreme honour.

# TORPEDOED BY REQUEST

*By*

REAR-ADMIRAL GORDON CAMPBELL

JANUARY, 1917, was spent at Plymouth in refitting, giving leave, and getting ready for the next round. The opportunity was taken of studying all that had happened in the submarine warfare during our absence abroad, and I came to the conclusion that the only way for us to ensure decoying the enemy to the surface was deliberately to get torpedoed and trust to still being in a position to fight with our guns afterwards. On the two previous occasions when torpedoes had been fired at us, we had merely taken our chance, but now I decided we must ensure getting hit. It can easily be seen that if a torpedo missed just ahead, it would have hit the ship provided we had been going a bit faster; so the idea now was that the ship would be manœuvred so as to make the torpedo hit.

I explained my intentions to my crew and called for volunteers to remain, giving any man who wished to leave the ship an opportunity to do so; but they all remained.

It was rather a strange coincidence that, previous to this, two men of different ratings had been showing signs of nervousness, and, on being questioned, they both stated that their wives were trying to persuade them to get out of it, as they (the wives) had dreamt that something dreadful was going to happen to the ship. In one case I was not too sorry for the excuse to get rid of the man, as, although a good fellow, he was not very skilled at his trade; but the other was an excellent fellow and obviously didn't want to leave. As his wife had only dreamt that the ship was coming to grief, and that he himself would be all right, it was suggested that he should square his wife by saying how lucky he was at being sure he would be all right, as no one else on board could say the same. He sailed.

During our refit it became known that the German intensified submarine warfare was due to start on February 1. This meant that all ships were liable to be sunk without warning if found approaching the British Isles, so we cut down our refit as much as possible and got away back to Queenstown before the end of the month. We sailed again on the last day of January, and had

instructions to return after ten days, as this was considered the suitable length for "mystery ships" to be at sea at a time, owing to their limited capacity for carrying fresh food and to the rather strenuous time the crew had when out. I protested without avail that we should like to remain out till we burnt our coal—twenty-two to twenty-three days. I knew my crew, and having had them, for the most part, with me a year, I knew also that fresh food, etc., didn't worry them so much as getting a submarine.

We proceeded at once to our old hunting-ground off the south-west of Ireland. This was where most of the traffic passed between America and England; where, too, the water being deep and the weather atrocious at times, the submarine was fairly free from the menace of mines or the molestation of auxiliary patrol craft. We intended working continually in this area, and some disguise in the appearance of the ship had to be made each night: this was particularly necessary, as the sinkings and attacks became increasingly numerous, showing that the submarines were unusually active, and one could not expect that by this time of the war they didn't know a good deal about mystery ships, and any chance of getting one would not be missed.

We arranged our procedure so that every night we were steaming to the westward, the dark hours being the time when the submarine would probably be busy recharging batteries or getting fresh air. During each day we were steaming east, as if homeward bound from America or Canada with a good fat cargo.

Daily we had reports of some ship being attacked or sunk, sometimes ten or fifteen miles away from us; sometimes anything up to a hundred. It seemed to be only a mathematical problem of "odds" as to when our turn to get torpedoed would come. The whole crew were waiting for it with enthusiasm. There is a good deal of difference between being in a ship where you know that if a torpedo is seen approaching, you are going to avoid it, and in being in one where you know you are going to make it hit; and yet I never saw a crew more anxious for the fray. They realized that if the Germans' intensified submarine warfare was a success, then England would be beaten. We were losing some 600,000 tons of shipping of all nationalities a month, and this of course could not go on for ever. And as there was nothing to stop the submarine coming out, it was up to the auxiliary patrols and the "side-show" parties, such as we were, to spare no effort and to risk everything in an attempt to grapple with the one weapon which could and nearly did bring England to her knees. So it was that,

when our ten days were up and we were due to return, I decided to remain out. Three times we were ordered to return, but three times I evaded. I felt we were "in touch with the enemy," and there are few orders which justify one in losing touch. I knew my C.-in-C. would do the same if he had been in my place. We remained out till our chance came after seventeen days. I have often heard people say we were lucky in our chance. There is, however, such a thing as looking for an opportunity, and my crew denied their leave, fresh food, and all the rest of it in order not to miss the chance if it came—and we should have stayed out till our coal was burnt.

The seventeen days were not without incident, apart from the attacks all around us. One day when approaching the south-west point of Ireland, in the afternoon, we sighted a submarine on the surface on our port bow; he remained in sight a few minutes and then dived. He had been heading towards us, and we expected an attack. At the estimated time for the torpedo to come, I had passed the word through the voice-pipes that a torpedo would arrive in a couple of minutes, but none came; and all we saw was a mine which passed a few yards off the ship. Nothing further was seen of the submarine, but a large number of mines were swept up the following day by the ever-alert minesweepers and trawlers. No ships were actually struck, though there were a number in sight at the time.

On February 4 we sighted a barque that had all sail set, but appeared suspicious. On closing her she appeared to be abandoned, and later, from intercepted signals, we gathered the crew had been picked up by one of H.M. sloops. She was a neutral ship who had been boarded by a submarine, and the master had been told that if he approached within a hundred miles of the British coast he would be sunk; as, however, he had not enough drinking water to return to America, he had abandoned his ship, although in perfect condition and with a cargo of maize. It happened that we were sailing under the same neutral colours, and I decided to take her in tow, as I thought she would make a good "decoy," not to mention a chance of salvage money. After dark we closed her, and I put a party on board to furl her square sails, leaving the fore and aft set. It was a slow job doing all this and getting her in tow, as I couldn't afford to deplete my ship too much, in case I got attacked, and so I only put Lieutenant Stuart, R.N.R., and three men aboard to do the job, and they, for the most part, did not know much about sailing ships. We eventually got her in

tow about 3 a.m. on the 5th, and I left on board Lieutenant Russell, R.N.R., three men, and a Maxim gun for self-defence. Arrangements were also made as to what to do if we got attacked. On no account were they to use their Maxim gun except as a last act of self-defence—the entire action would be fought by Q.5. The latter event nearly came off, as the following afternoon a ship which had been in sight nearly all day and was about eight to ten miles ahead suddenly blew up in a large explosion. She was an ammunition ship, and had been torpedoed. The flames and smoke went to a great height. The alarm was sounded, and we awaited an attack on ourselves; but, much to our disgust, the periscope of a submarine was seen close on our starboard side, though no attack was made. It turned out afterwards that the submarine had herself been damaged by the force of the explosion and was obliged to return back home.

When we got to the place where the ship had sunk, there was nothing to be seen except one small piece of wood and a lifebelt.

Even this sight didn't deter my crew from the intention of risking a similar fate, though the strain was fairly severe, especially for the men in the engine and boiler-rooms, as they have the least chance of coming out free from a hit by torpedo or mine, and also see least or nothing of the "fun." But the engineering staff can always be relied on to turn up trumps: they are the men who take a ship into action, see it through, and bring her out; without them we should be done.

After this slight flutter of excitement we continued our tow without incident, till we got to Berehaven about 2 a.m. on the 6th. Here we were met by a most important M.L., who, having received a fictitious name from me, ordered us to follow him into harbour. I would gladly have done so, but he went over shallow water through which I couldn't possibly follow him, especially with a ship in tow. Very irate he returned, and in his best language, at which he was evidently a pastmaster, he ordered me to obey his orders forthwith and follow him. Again I was obliged to decline his lead, and when he returned a second time I suggested he might give me the secret signal for the night to pass through the defence. He told me to mind my own business! Pity I didn't understand English! etc., etc. Eventually we got past the defences, and I hoped all was peace, but back he came to tell me to anchor in a certain position. I replied that I was going farther up, as I wanted to see the senior naval officer urgently. He then wanted to know

who the something something I thought I was. I told him Commander Gordon Campbell. No sooner had we anchored than he came alongside full of apologies, and over a cup of cocoa we both agreed we had carried out our duties entirely to our satisfaction. It was Keble Chatterton.

Having turned our "tow" over to the senior naval officer, we got away again before daylight and returned to our old haunt. Our ten days were now nearly up, but, as I have related, we went on. It is difficult to explain the feelings we had and the anxiety we felt to get at the job when ships with valuable cargoes were being sunk almost under our very noses. Surely our chance must come, and sure enough on February 17 it arrived.

On the previous night we had heard two submarines talking to each other. It was nothing very unusual, but, for some reason undefinable, we were particularly interested.

At 9.45 a.m. on the 17th we were on our easterly course "homeward bound" in about longitude  $11\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  west, latitude  $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  north. The sea was calm, it was a nice fine day, and everything looked peaceful. Suddenly a torpedo was seen approaching from our starboard side: it was fired at a great range and we would have had time to avoid it, but (as had been prearranged) we wanted to make sure it hit. Nothing, therefore, was done till it was close to the ship and coming straight for the engine-room. At the last moment, when it would be too late for the enemy to see our movement, I put the helm over to avoid unnecessary loss of life and brought the torpedo just abaft the engine-room, which undoubtedly saved the lives of those below, but caught us on the bulkhead and flooded, in consequence, two-thirds of the ship.

Whilst the torpedo was approaching, I sang out to the navigator, who was in the chart-house working out his morning observations, "Look out, we are going to get it all right." He only bobbed his head outside and said, "Aye, aye, sir; just time to finish this sight," and back he went, quite disinterested except to complete his job which was to have our position always accurate in case we wanted it.

The torpedo exploded with a great crash and knocked several of us down, including myself. Smith, who was on watch in the engine-room and nearest to the explosion, had the worst shaking, but he quickly recovered himself and went to his panic-party station in charge of a boat. After getting up, I observed a thing which I hadn't foreseen and I couldn't help laughing at. It will be remembered that we had drilled for nearly every emergency, and how

I would say "Torpedo coming," and then "Torpedo hit" or "Torpedo missed." Now the torpedo had hit and I saw the men rushing for the boats, but on looking over the front of the bridge I saw a group of men still smoking and lolling over the ship's side when they ought to have been "panicking." I shouted out to know why the something something they weren't rushing for the boats. The reply was, "Waiting for the order, sir, 'Torpedo hit.'" They then joined in the pandemonium, and whilst the panic party were getting away in the boats, the submarine was seen watching us through his periscope about two hundred yards off the ship. This will show the necessity of even the "panic" being done in correct detail, and sure enough it was. The boats were lowered in a fashion enough to give any commander seven fits, and the crew got in anyhow; one boat was only partially lowered and then allowed to "jam," so that a rush was made for the next one, but two lifeboats and a dinghy eventually shoved off with "all" the crew, Lieutenant Hereford with my M.O.B.C. hat getting down last. An unrehearsed incident added to the panic, and this was through my friend the chief steward (who was a very fat man) getting pushed over the side with the crowd; his weight was too much for his arms to support from the rope and he landed with a great thud in the boat, squashing two or three men who were already in.

Whilst this pantomime was going on, things were happening on board. The ship had only two bulkheads and the torpedo had burst the after one, so that she was free to the water from the fore side of the boiler-room right to the stern, and she rapidly began to settle by the stern—so rapidly that our black cat, which had either been blown off the fore-castle by the explosion or had jumped over in fright, swam down the ship's side and inboard over the stern.

The chief engineer reported that the engine-room was flooded, and I ordered him and his men to hide, which they did by crawling on the top gratings: the ship being abandoned, they couldn't come out on deck—again an unrehearsed incident, but Loveless and all of them knew the game we were out to play.

As soon as the boats were away, the submarine went close to them only a few yards off, she was obviously going to leave nothing to chance, and it was as well that the crew were carefully dressed to their part with no service flannels. One of the crew in the boats was heard telling another, as the periscope was looking at them, "Don't talk so loud; he'll hear you!"

The submarine now came and inspected the ship at very close



range, some ten or fifteen yards—so close that from my look-out at the starboard end of the bridge I could see the whole of his hull under water. The temptation to open fire on the periscope was very great, though obviously not the thing to do, as it would have done no harm. But it looked at the time as if, after getting deliberately torpedoed, we were going to have nothing to show for it since he appeared to be moving off.

The chief had reported the ship sinking by the stern; still, there was nothing for it but to wait and watch the submarine move slowly past the ship and away ahead. All this time the men on board were lying hidden, feeling the ship getting deeper by the stern—in fact, the men at the after-gun were practically awash—but they all stuck it and never moved a muscle. Each one had a responsibility. Had one man got in a real panic and showed himself, the game would have been up; the scrutiny of the submarine was indeed a severe one. The wireless operator, locked up in his cabin by himself, had to sit still and do nothing; he must have been aching to send out an SOS and have his picture in the illustrated papers next day as “the man who sent out the SOS,” but he knew we wanted no one to interfere with our cold-blooded encounter with the enemy.

After the submarine had passed up the starboard side, he crossed our bow and went over towards port; the signalman and I, therefore, did our “belly crawl” and swapped places. At 10.5 a.m. the enemy broke surface about three hundred yards on our port bow, but not in the bearing of any of the guns. Anyhow, things were looking more hopeful, and I was able to tell the men that all was going well. The boats had by this time got to our port quarter, and towards them the submarine now proceeded. We heard afterwards that their intention had been to take the “master” prisoner and also get some provisions. It was only a matter of waiting now, as the submarine was right up with conning tower open. It was obvious that she would pass very close to the ship, and we might just as well have all guns bearing, so as to make sure of it. As she came abreast of the ship the captain was seen coming out of the conning tower. At this moment I gave the order to open fire—at 10.10—twenty-five minutes after we had been torpedoed. The White Ensign fluttered at the mast-head, and three 12-pounders, a 6-pounder, the Maxim guns and rifles all opened fire together. What a shock it must have been for the captain suddenly to see our wheel-house collapse, our sides to fall down, and the hen-coop to splutter forth Maxim shots!

But he had not long to think, as the first shot, which was from the 6-pounder, hit him, and I believe the first intimation the submarine crew had that anything was wrong was seeing their captain drop through the conning tower.

The range was only about one hundred yards, so the submarine never had a chance of escape. It seemed almost brutal to fire at such close range, but we had taken a sporting chance ourselves in decoying him to such an ideal position that one really had no other thought than destruction.

The submarine never seemed to recover from her surprise as she lay on the surface upon our beam, whilst we pumped lead and steel into her. Forty-five shells were fired in all, practically every one being a hit, so that she finally sank with the conning tower shattered and open, the crew pouring out as hard as they could. About eight men were seen in the water, which was bitterly cold and thick with oil. I ordered the boats to their assistance, and they were just in time to rescue one officer and one man—as the panic party called them, a “sample of each.” Thus ended U.83. That night we heard his pal calling him up on the wireless and receiving no reply.

I received the prisoners on the bridge, having slipped on a decent uniform monkey-jacket and cap, which I always kept handy for the purpose. As the service expression goes, they had “no complaints,” and I regret that after being transferred to a destroyer, one of them died before he could be landed and was buried at sea.

Our main object of destroying the enemy having been achieved, the next important consideration was the ship itself. As soon as the submarine had come to the surface, I had sent out a wireless to our C-in-C. informing him that we had been torpedoed, and now further signals were sent for assistance.

The panic party came back to the ship, whilst a rapid survey was being made. The engine-room and boiler-room were both full of water; and Nos. 3 and 4 holds, the two after ones, were rapidly filling. I didn't appreciate at that time what stability the cargo of wood would give us, and it appeared that in a very short time the ship would sink by the stern, as she was surely and slowly settling down. I therefore mustered my crew and called for twelve volunteers to stand by the ship, the remainder to get out of harm's way in the boats. Everyone volunteered to stay, so I selected twelve. It never struck me at the time that with myself the number was now thirteen; anyhow, the sequel will show that thirteen is after all a lucky number

By eleven o'clock there were still no signs of any rescue ships, though I knew without being told that our C.-in-C. would send everything available. The ship was settling still more, and I gave orders for all confidential matter to be destroyed, as we could not afford to run the risk that any of it might float about if the ship sank and be picked up by the enemy. This specially referred to secret charts we had on board, which had to be burnt. The steel chest with our codes, etc., was therefore ditched; but before doing so, we sent in code a farewell message to our commander-in-chief: "Q.5 slowly sinking respectfully wishes you good-bye."

H.M.S. *Narwhal*, a destroyer, arriving about noon, I sent the major part of my crew on board her and myself went over to see what could be done in the way of towing. H.M.S. *Buttercup* arrived shortly afterwards, and I arranged for her to take us in tow. With the twelve men I had, we got the ship in tow, thanks chiefly to the good seamanship of the *Buttercup*.

Q.5 herself had now ceased to get any deeper in the water, and had assumed a more or less definite position; presumably because as much water as possible had got into the ship and she was only now gradually getting water-logged.

No sooner were we in tow than the cable parted, owing to our helm being jammed hard over and immovable. Luckily, our donkey-boiler, or auxiliary boiler, was high up in the ship, and we were able to raise steam in this, which gave power to steer and assistance in working the cable, and we eventually got in tow about 5 p.m., the raising of steam and the necessary connections to the steering gear taking some time. The ship towed fairly well, but of course the movement ahead increased the strain, and with the swell breaking on board the stern gradually got deeper—in fact, the after-gunhouse was sometimes under water.

H.M.S. *Laburnum* had in the meantime arrived and acted as escort, whilst the *Narwhal* returned to harbour with my main crew and the prisoners. At about 2 o'clock on the following morning the ship suddenly started to heel over, and the water gained to such an extent as to put the donkey-boiler out, which once more deprived us of our rudder; luckily we were able to heave it amidships before the last "drop of steam" vanished.

The chief and I made a tour of the ship to try to find the cause of this inrush of water. It was pitch dark, and we had only candles which kept on going out, but we were able to grovel into the bunkers. We found that the coal had been washed out of the starboard bunkers and replaced by water, which was gradually

rising. Whilst we were down below, the ship gave another lurch and we thought we would be trapped; and to add to the uncanniness of the situation, our candle having gone out, we heard the cat somewhere near us meowing, and, despite the somewhat critical situation, we spent quite a time groping about trying to find it, but without success. The humour of the situation did not strike me then, but has often done so since. Here was a ship in a sinking condition and two of her senior officers groping about in the dark in bunker spaces trying to find a cat. I think it must have been recollections of the unhappiness caused by its disappearance at Bermuda which made us do it and its success in getting back to the ship after being torpedoed.

At 3.30 a.m. I ordered my remaining crew into the boat, which we had kept alongside, and told the *Laburnum* we were coming over. I was doing a last "walk round" to see that everyone was out of it, when one of the depth charges exploded on its own account, just as I was approaching the after-part. It was right in the stern, which at that time was under water, and what caused it to go off will, of course, never be known. Anyhow, I didn't waste much time thinking about it, as at the moment I was the only person on board, and knowing that a magazine was just below it, it didn't take me many seconds to get with the others in the boat. I said I was alone, but I found afterwards I wasn't, as Stuart hadn't obeyed the order to get into the boat, for he thought it part of his job to see I was "all right." Like the rest of them, he used to spoil me looking after my comfort and welfare.

Having got into the motor-boat we shoved off, but, of course, it wouldn't run, so we drifted about till we were picked up by the *Laburnum*. None of us, of course, had any lights showing. The *Buttercup*, having heard the explosion of the depth charge, thought the ship had been torpedoed again, and without more ado or looking for survivors quietly slipped the tow and returned to harbour, reporting that we had been torpedoed again and probably all lost.

It is true that the depth charge had done further damage, but when daylight came the ship was still afloat, more or less a derelict. A party of six of us went over, and the *Laburnum* got us in tow again. Having got the ship in tow, we returned to the *Laburnum*, as there was nothing of use to be done on board and it was unnecessarily risking life to remain there. During the day I received orders to sink the old ship, for the C.-in-C. thought she would become a water-logged derelict and a danger to others. Since she was still safely in tow, and there was a reasonable chance

of beaching her, I reported accordingly and towing continued. Towards the evening we were approaching Berehaven and I went over again with a few men. The ship at this time was heeling over twenty degrees, and the stern was eight feet under water. As we got towards the harbour a mine was sighted on the surface, and I remarked that it would be bad luck to be "done in" by a mine now. My old pensioner, Truscott, who was always at hand, especially if there was any seamanship required, said, "Don't you worry, sir; not fifty mines could sink us now." It was just typical of the spirit of the men.

As we got to the entrance, the king's harbour master, Commander Sharpe, came on board and told us the best place to beach her; the *Laburnum* slipped the tow, the trawler *Luneda* and the tug *Flying Sportsman* came alongside, and, aided by them, we pushed the old *Loderer*, alias *Farnborough*, alias Q.5, on the beach at 9.30 p.m.

As I reported at the time, I think our safe arrival in harbour was chiefly due to the good seamanship displayed by Lieutenant-Commander Hallwright in the *Laburnum*, for it was no easy job getting the ship in tow with such conditions. It was done chiefly by the very skilful handling of his ship, but also in a very short space of time the few men I had on board had done their full share, and I smiled to think that had we been a full-fledged man-of-war we should have had some fifty men on the forecastle instead of five.

We had already received a wireless from our C.-in-C. after the action, saying, "Splendidly done; your magnificent perseverance and ability are well rewarded," and now we got another message: "Very good piece of work. Well done." Such messages mean a lot at any time. When the men were tired after a trying time, and, being as we were under a man who is not given to wasting words, they were all the more appreciated.

After the ship had been beached we had a "night in"—such as it was, because we found that though at low tide the ship was fairly dry of water and we could raise steam in our donkey-boiler again, yet at high tide the ship was under water up to the bridge and we had about forty degrees list. All our provisions and luxuries had, of course, gone, and living on board ship with a forty degrees list is no pleasant job, but I suppose we were imbued with the army tradition of "saving the guns," and we decided to try to save the lot. Admiral Bayly had kindly sent his flagship, under Captain Hyde (now Rear-Admiral Hyde, R.N.R.), to give

us assistance and comfort, but being pig-headed we refused the comfort, though were glad of the assistance, especially of his warrant officers, such as the gunner and shipwright—possibly a foolish decision on my part, because it was unnecessarily hard going for the thirteen of us on board, although it had its sense of humour. As the tide fell, the chief would raise steam in the donkey-boiler and we would get steam on the windlass and derricks; then as the tide rose, he would damp his fires, and, instead of our being able to work on salvage, we were by the increasing list of the ship unable to do anything except wait the turn of tide, or in the meantime start the gramophone and enjoy life on a deck sloping at forty degrees. Whilst we were doing all this, much to our surprise Admiral Bayly made a special visit to Berehaven in H.M.S. *Penelope* to see the ship, and he had us all aboard his temporary flagship to say a few words, which we all much appreciated.

After a week's hard work, all the guns were salvaged and everything else that could be, and we left the old ship on the beach. She was eventually salvaged, and not only sailed again during the war as an ordinary tramp steamer, but was still running till May 1928, under various names and owners, her last name being *Hollypark*.

# ATTACK ON KANGCHENJUNGA

*By*

F. S. SMYTHE

ON May 10, the day after the accident, Professor Dyhrenfurth, Kurz and Dr. Richter arrived from Base Camp, and a conference was held on the situation. "Conference" is perhaps a little misleading. It is a word conjuring up a picture of frock-coated gentlemen seated round a long mahogany table, the highly polished surface of which reflects waistcoats ornamented with gold watch-chains, and earnest countenances on which responsibility and a heavy lunch sit heavily. In the present instance I must ask the reader to imagine the sombre interior of the large porters' tent, the thick canvas of which reduces the light within to a faint depressing green, whilst a pungent reek of smoke struggles with a faint, yet perceptible odour of unwashed bodies that have lain there during the previous night. In the middle a heterogeneous collection of packing cases do duty as a table. Seated on other packing cases are a number of unsavoury looking ragamuffins with unkempt hair, frowsy beards, cracked sun-scorched countenances, and eyes bleared by the snow glare.

The first suggestion made by those who had remained at the Base Camp was that the attack on the ice wall should be renewed, but this was very properly rejected by all those who had shared in the attack. The sole remaining alternative was to attempt the North-west Ridge which rises from the western tributary of the Kangchenjunga Glacier. This ridge ends in a snow and ice terrace beneath the Kangbachen summit, twenty-five thousand seven hundred and eighty-two feet, of Kangchenjunga. Even supposing the terrace to be reached, however, the most we could hope for was to ascend the Kangbachen summit, as there was no possibility of traversing to the highest summit, as both distance and difficulty were too great. Personally, I must confess to a longing to flee from the mountain altogether, and be able to lie in a sleeping bag at nights and sleep undisturbed by the fear of annihilation from ice avalanches. I suggested, therefore, that we should retire, cross the Jonsong La, and attempt the Jonsong Peak, twenty-four thousand three hundred and forty-four feet high. This idea met with no support, and it was decided to attempt the North-west

Ridge. Should we fail, as it seemed certain we must do, judging from appearances, at all events we could ascend the Western Tributary Glacier, explore its head, and possibly climb the Ramthang Peak.

In order to do this, it was decided to move Camp One across the glacier to the foot of the rocky spur separating the Western Tributary Glacier from the glacier falling between the Wedge Peak and the Ramthang Peak. This new site would have the advantage of being considerably safer than the present one, for it was by no means certain that we were safe in the event of an exceptionally large ice avalanche falling from Kangchenjunga or the Twins. This uncertainty was emphasized the same afternoon in a startling fashion.

We were aroused from an after-lunch siesta by the thunder-clap of a great avalanche. We issued from our tents in alarm. Thousands of feet above us on the face of Kangchenjunga masses of hanging glacier were collapsing. Sweeping the precipices with appalling violence, the avalanche crashed down to the glacier, and roared straight across at us.

Huge clouds of snow were raised by the wind blast from the surface of the glacier, and came rushing down upon the camp. They concealed the falling ice, and it was hard to tell whether the camp was safe or not. My own inclination was to run for it, and I was about to bolt precipitately when I saw Duval calmly turning the handle of his cine camera with that sang-froid peculiar to his calling, the tradition of which demands that the handle of a cine camera shall be turned in the face of charging elephants, and at shipwrecks, fires, explosions, earthquakes and other catastrophies. Fired by his example, I pulled out my own folding camera and took a hurried snap. The avalanche resembled the white clouds of some new and deadly form of gas attack. The God of Kangchenjunga is evidently well up in the technique of modern warfare. The roar of the avalanche subsided. We knew that we were safe from ice debris, but the clouds of snow continued to pour down the glacier towards the camp with extraordinary velocity. The next moment a wind blast struck the camp, and a blizzard of snow sent us scuttling into shelter.

The blizzard lasted some minutes, and when it had cleared the upper part of the glacier was seen to be covered in nearly an inch of wind-blown snow. The actual ice debris of the avalanche had stopped well short of the camp, but it had swept quite half a mile down the glacier. This was not the only avalanche; other lesser



ones fell, but none of such terrifying dimensions. It was obvious, however, that it was a mere question of volume and momentum whether or not the camp was to be swept away by a future avalanche. If it was a rest day for tired bodies, it was scarcely so for nerve-racked minds.

It was a simple matter moving camp the next day, and the new site on the other side of the glacier was safer than any we had yet discovered. We had not been able to bring down all our equipment from Camp Two, so some porters under the charge of Kurz went up to fetch it. Schneider and Duvanel, meanwhile, descended to the Base Camp, the former in order to make a new track up the glacier to our new camp, the latter to develop some cine film. I was left in charge of the evacuation of the old camp, and took the opportunity of donning a pair of ski, and making short runs on the glacier. The snow was excellent and similar to late spring Alpine snow.

The new Camp One was pitched in a fine situation. There was a delightful view northwards up the moraine-stacked Jonsong Glacier winding sinuously up towards the little notch of the Jonsong La. The background was dominated by the rocky mass of the Jonsong Peak. Farther to the east, rose a ridge of icy peaks running northwards from Kangchenjunga and the Twins, from which the Tent Peak, twenty-four thousand and eighty-nine feet, rose head and shoulders above everything else. It is as aptly named as the Wedge Peak, for its horizontal summit ridge with its small points at either end resembles a tent, the ridge of which sags between its supporting poles.

Some useful stores arrived from the Base Camp that day, among them being synthetic rubber ground-sheets for the tents. Though light and spongy, and weighing but a pound or so each, the difference they made to our comfort was amazing, and we were able to sleep then and afterwards far more warmly and comfortably than we would have done otherwise, insulated as we were from the snow. There is no question that they are far superior to any ground-sheet, and form an item of equipment that no future Himalayan expedition can afford to leave out, for they induce the sleep which is so essential if climbers are to keep fit.

Relieved by the thought that we were tolerably safe from avalanches, we slept well that night. It would have been wise to have started early the next morning while the snow was still hard from the overnight frost, but we did not get away until the sun had thawed its crust sufficiently to let it break beneath our weight.

The obvious route up the Western Tributary Glacier was a trough between the glacier and the rock ridge forming its northern containing wall. The trough was snow-filled for most of its distance, except for one section where a scree slope interposed. These troughs, which form such a convenient line of least resistance up the glaciers of this district are perhaps the only thing vouchsafed by Kangchenjunga which seems to have been intended for the benefit of the long-suffering mountaineer.

Wieland and I, with some porters, were the first to set off. Hoerlin, Kurz, and some more porters were to follow, but at the last moment Kurz, who was again not feeling well, decided to return to the Base Camp.

The snow in the trough was in the worst possible condition. We floundered waist-deep into holes between concealed snow-covered boulders, and wallowed in hollows where the snow was soft and watery. An hour passed; we had made but little progress. I suggested to Wieland that we should leave the trough in favour of the ice-fall of the glacier. In making this suggestion I was actuated by the fact that at one place the trough seemed likely to be swept by falling stones from the cliffs above. Hoerlin, was of a different mind; he would stick to the trough. As things transpired, he was right; the danger was more apparent than real.

Ascending the ice-fall was fatiguing work on account of the soft snow. Snow-shoes eased the porters' labours to some extent, but there were not enough pairs to go round. Considering how broken was the ice, it was remarkable how few crevasses there were, but these few were dangerous ones, subtly concealed. We toiled up and down over hummocks, or threaded our way between pinnacles. The devil of doubt began to gnaw at our hearts; would we be able to get through the ice-fall? The sun beat down upon us mercilessly, and glacier lassitude sapped the strength of sahib and porter alike. At last we saw a sort of corridor leading from the ice-fall into the upper part of the trough. We could see that the trough was perfectly safe, but had it been dangerous, we should still have preferred it to the sweltering gullies and hollows of the ice-fall, for glacier lassitude tends to undermine the judgment and warp the conscience of the mountaineer.

A crevasse barred the way. We stepped gingerly on to a fragile snow bridge. Icicles were dislodged and went tinkling down into the green depths with a noise like the banging together of small chandeliers. The corridor stretched ahead; its smooth, snow floor looked innocuous, but Wieland suddenly disappeared up to his

waist in a concealed crevasse: it was merely one of Kangchenjunga's little jokes.

At the top of the trough, where it debouches on to the glacier, above the worst of the ice-fall, there is a short section liable to be swept by ice avalanches from a hanging glacier forming the edge of a snow plateau on the Ramthang Peak. While still within the danger area we were startled by a sudden crash, but all that came down were a few boulders and blocks of ice.

The porters were by now very tired, and they begged us to camp as soon as possible. We promised to do so as soon as we were out of range of ice avalanches. The sun was declining, and evening mists gathering around us as we reached the smooth slopes above the ice-fall, where stretched Hoerlin's straggling track, man's first score on these snow-fields. Here we decided to camp, while Wieland went on with ski to bring down Hoerlin, who had camped some distance farther up the glacier.

The evening was strangely still save for an undercurrent of sound, as though the goblins and witches who haunt the cliffs of Kangchenjunga above were murmuring at our coming. As usual, it was the wind. An upward glance disclosed the snow eddying and swirling from the polished ice cliffs defending the snowy terraces. The sun set calmly. Barely had its last rays faded when they were replaced by silver moon sheen behind the North Ridge of Kangchenjunga. The snow blown off the ridge by the wind was illumined from behind, and Kangchenjunga took to itself a glowing aureole of light. Imperceptibly the upper snow-slopes were resolved from the darkness; ghostlike, unreal, they shimmered far above the world. Mindless of the cold, we stood outside our tents entranced by the glorious spectacle. At long last the laggardly moon peered over the ridge in a shy, self-deprecating sort of way. It seemed to wither and shrivel as it mounted into the frosty sky and its radiance, at first soft and wan, became a hard, cold electric blue. Details stood forth as clearly as in daylight. Only the shadows were black, and in these lurked the darkness of a pit.

The cold gripped us. We crawled into our tents, and with numbed fingers laced-to the flaps. As Sir Leslie Stephen wrote: "Bodily fatigue and an appreciation of natural scenery are simply incompatible." He might have added cold and discomfort.

The sun reached us early the next morning, and we were off betimes. Our first business was to move camp farther up the glacier to a site that would form a convenient upper base for

operations against the North-west Ridge. As we marched up the glacier we were able to examine the latter. First impressions are not always accurate and it is never easy to assess the difficulties of a mountainside or ridge at their true worth. As that great mountaineer, Captain J. P. Farrar used to remark: "You can never tell what rocks are like until you have rubbed your nose against them." Yet, even bearing these things in mind, no ridge I have examined affected me with the same feeling of utter and complete hopelessness as that of the North-west Ridge of Kangchenjunga. Picture a ridge rising four thousand feet. Thin, trim and whittle down its edges until they are as keen as a Gurkha's *kukri*; then hack deep gaps into these edges and perch rocky towers hundreds of feet high on them. Armour every smooth bit with ice, and mask every ledge with snow, and you will perhaps obtain a faint glimmering of an idea of the North-west Ridge of Kangchenjunga. The ridge attempted by the Munich party is formidable, but it cannot compare to the North-west Ridge. Ice pinnacles alone had to be surmounted on the former; spiky rock pinnacles bar the way on the latter, and between these are some of those extraordinary ice ridges peculiar to the Himalayas. In appearance and sensationalism they are comparable to those on the Wedge Peak. There are the same tottering masses, the same biscuit-like flakes through which the sun gleams, the same extravagant forms, hacked and torn by the wind, lurching and tottering at the behest of gravity, and the same ice flutings to emphasize by their graceful lines the appalling steepness of the slopes they decorate. If we had been forced to attack the ridge from its base, I think we would have relinquished any idea of attempting it at the outset, for the lowest rock towers are hopeless from a climbing point of view. It looked possible, however, to gain the crest of the ridge above these initial pinnacles, by a steep snow-filled couloir about six hundred feet high, leading upwards from the glacier to one of the gaps in the crest of the ridge.

Camp was pitched on the glacier, and leaving the porters to make it comfortable we set off to climb the couloir. The lower half was simple; then the angle steepened. It was not difficult, but care had to be taken that the footsteps kicked in the floury snow that masked rock slabs and ice did not collapse. The last hundred feet was very steep. The angle must have exceeded sixty degrees, but we were comforted by the thought that we could fix a rope to facilitate the descent. A small cornice leaned over the summit. The leader, Hoerlin, hacked and flogged it down, and squirmed

through and over to the gap, Wieland and I following one by one. The ascent had taken only forty-five minutes, indicating that we had become well acclimatized to altitude.

My first impression was probably somewhat similar to that experienced by a house-breaker, not a burglar, but one of those phlegmatic gentlemen who stands on the dizzy edges of aged and tottering walls knocking bricks off into space with a pick-axe. But surely no house-breaker has ever stood on top of such an unstable wall as we found ourselves on. A modern £25 down and balance in rent villa could scarcely be more "jerrybuilt" than the place on which we stood. On either side of us the rocks were piled in loose masses needing but a touch to send them crashing down on either side of the ridge below us. On the opposite side of the ridge to that which we had ascended loose yellowish precipices dropped to the head of the Ramthang Glacier. From our gap it appeared possible to descend to the glacier down another steep gully, scarred with falling debris. Such a descent would, however, involve unavoidable dangers. And far above this scene of perpetual decay rose the great ice slopes and ice walls of Kangchenjunga.

Is there any hope of ascending Kangchenjunga from the Ramthang Glacier? The answer must be, no, unless the climber is prepared to take his life, *and* the lives of his porters in his hand. Like the face above the Kangchenjunga Glacier, that above the Ramthang Glacier is defended by enormous walls of ice running across the mountainside. At one point only is there any hope of climbing the *lowest* of these ice walls, and this point is also liable to be swept at any moment by ice avalanches from another and tottering ice wall above. Kangchenjunga was not built for the mountaineer.

Leaving rucksacks and spare rope, we commenced to climb along the unstable ridge. Almost immediately, we were forced off the crest to avoid a decrepit rocky tower. A traverse had to be made on the southern side of the ridge over steep, loose rocks, here and there treacherously covered in snow. It was a place not so much difficult as dangerous. There was not a reliable rock round which a rope could be placed to secure the party, and had a slip occurred, it would in all probability have been attended by the worst results.

From the traverse, an upward ascent brought us into the mouth of a loose gully, the head of which consisted of slippery slabs disagreeably covered by a few inches of unstable scree.

It is curious how on any climb the mental equilibrium of the mountaineer is liable to be upset by bad rock. Difficulty is one thing, danger another. The nerve-stressed mountaineer needing a safety valve for his feelings frequently finds an outlet for them in forceful language. I make no excuses, therefore, for certain improper remarks when clambering up these rocks. I cannot remember what Hoerlin and Wieland said, I had not yet learned the English translation of the German epithets that they held in reserve for such occasions, but once, Hoerlin turned and remarked to me in perfect English, "These rocks are ——!" sentiments which, happily, I was able to return with interest.

The principal advantage of taking photographs on a mountain is that the mountaineer is thus enabled to stop at frequent intervals and recover his breath. That is why most elderly mountaineers carry cameras. Taking a photograph is a much more convincing excuse for a halt than a boot-lace or braces that need adjusting. All those liable to be touched in the wind should take a camera. With what the reader will no doubt consider admirable foresight, I had brought up my camera with me, and not left it at the gap. I was not blown, but the ridge beyond the top of the little gully appeared so uninviting that I decided to stop there and photograph Hoerlin and Wieland doing it.

Seated in a sheltered place, with the sun glancing warmly down upon me, I was able to appreciate the situation to the full. For a short distance the ridge appeared possible, and although extremely loose, not excessively difficult. But beyond the next tower it was very different. It rose abruptly in a huge pinnacle, quite three hundred feet high, and above this pinnacle, connecting it to the next pinnacle, was the first of those appalling ice ridges. As I sat there I tried to think of an Alpine ridge comparable to it, but I could think of none. The Pétéret, the Brenva, the East Ridge of the Jungfrau, none would fit.

How were porters to be got up? Even supposing ropes were to be fixed the whole way up the smooth slabs of the first great pinnacle, they would not be able to climb with anything but a light load; also we had lost so much rope in the avalanche that we certainly had not enough to spare for even this first pinnacle. There was, however, no necessity for experiencing renewed pessimism. What we were now seeing simply confirmed the opinion that some of us had formed when gazing from the glacier below.

Hoerlin and Wieland were moving slowly and carefully, but

even so they could not avoid dislodging many rocks which thundered down the precipices of the Ramthang Glacier. They turned a corner, and disappeared from view, but presently I saw them on the top of another minor pinnacle. There they remained, and I formed the conclusion that they could not advance farther.

The usual mists gathered, but without threatening anything beyond desultory snow flurries. Occasionally, they rolled aside to disclose a beautiful snow mountain, unknown and unnamed in a south-westerly direction, apparently on the ridge separating the Yalung and Ramthang Glaciers. This peak was in shape something like the Ober Gabelhorn, and possessed the same sweeping lines as the graceful Zermatt peak. Jannu should have been visible beyond, but mists obscured it. Almost immediately beneath us was the camp we had just established. We seemed to be looking almost vertically down upon it so steep were the precipices below. It seemed that a jump would have landed us on our tents. Above the camp, the Western Tributary Glacier swept up serenely to the col separating the Ramthang Peak from the first rock towers of the ridge we were on. The Ramthang Peak itself was playing hide-and-seek in a fitful mist but what was visible of it reminded me forcibly of the Monch seen from the Jungfrau Glacier. There were the same graceful lines, the same flowing yet defiant massiveness.

It was late when we returned to camp, where we found Professor Dyhrenfurth, Schneider and Duvanel, who had come up that day from Camp One. I fear none of us was particularly optimistic over the day's work, and it was refreshing to find that Professor Dyhrenfurth did not agree with an opinion that the ridge was hopelessly inaccessible and considered that we should continue with the attack towards the terrace above.

For once, the afternoon clouds, instead of thickening for a snowstorm, dissolved. The evening was a calm and beautiful one, sky and world were unsullied by a single speck of cloud, a profound silence brooded over the sanctuaries of the snows, and only an occasional streamer of wind-blown snow sallied into space from the upper reaches of Kangchenjunga. Slowly night's floods filled the valleys, and the peaks became steeped in gaudy hues, like waxen deities covering their countenances with rouge and lipstick. Imperceptibly, the aerial pageantry died, but its riot of colourings was superseded by an afterglow which released the peaks from night's bonds for a few instants revealing them as cold statues of

purest alabaster against a sky of deepest indigo. It was of such a day's end that Mr. G. Winthrop Young once wrote :

When in the hour of mountain peace  
The tumult and the passion cease,  
As the red sunfloods sink,  
And the pale lords of sovereign height,  
Watch the cold armies of the night  
Mustering their first assault.

Who would suspect evil to lurk in such a sunset? Yet, somehow, its superlative colourings put me in mind of a sunset I had once watched from a tiny ledge twelve thousand feet up on the south face of Mont Maudit. *That* had been a sunset preceding a heavy snowstorm in which retreat had been no easy matter.

I awoke some hours later to hear the pattering of snow on my tent. In the quietude it sounded like the light tread of fairy feet. Presently I became aware of a faint under-current of sound like the far-off throb of a train down some pastoral valley. The train approached, its distant murmurings rising gradually to a booming crescendo of sound. A gust of wind struck the tent, hurling the snowflakes against it with rude fierce spatterings. The gust passed, but soon came another and stronger gust. In a few minutes the blizzard burst, furiously sweeping upon our encampment. I snuggled more closely into my sleeping bag, for strong though the tent fabric was, it was not entirely proof against this bitter onslaught at a height of twenty thousand feet. We had thought to be sheltered by the North-west Ridge, but it afforded no protection, for the wind seemed to pour over it like a cataract, and descend almost vertically upon the camp.

The gusts grew stronger, they wailed and shrilled, rising to a roaring sort of boom like an express train racing through a tunnel. I could feel the tent floor rise as though malicious wind devils were undermining it with the object of my abode flying upwards into space. The wind dug viciously at the sides, or strove with strong fingers to tear apart the flaps, and burst the tent asunder. I prayed that Nemu had driven the pegs firmly and deeply into the snow, and then I recollected that the guy ropes were pitifully thin, no thicker than a sashline. There seemed every possibility of the tent carrying away; if it did, there would be little fun in being overtaken by such a disaster clad only in underclothes, so I struggled out of my sleeping bag, pulled on my climbing clothes, and packed my rucksack with some necessities.



The storm had now reached a pitch of intensity I had never before experienced when camping, and the night was filled with thunderous volleyings. Sometimes the wind would sink to a mysterious calm, during which it was possible to hear the storm snarling and worrying on the North-west Ridge as a preliminary before gathering its forces for a fresh charge on the camp. It was during one of these temporary lulls that I heard a sort of wailing outside, a wailing more human than storm-like. Peering through the flaps, I could just perceive a figure crawling through the snow. It approached my tent. In the light of my electric torch I saw the white, frightened face of Nagpa, the cook. "Sahib! Sahib!" he cried, "Tent go! Tent go!" Opening the flaps wider, I glanced out, the porters' tent was intact; the cook had merely lost his head. I was unwilling to have him for a bedfellow, and told him to go back. The cook, however, was completely demoralized, and shielding his face from the blast, he crawled down the line of tents with his constant wailing of "Sahib! Sahib! Tent go! Tent go!" Eventually, he found sanctuary with Wieland and Schneider, but as they explained later, they took him in not for love or charity, but simply as additional ballast for their own tent! It was the solitary untoward incident of the storm. Well and truly had our tents been pitched.

An hour or two later the wind began to subside, and ere dawn it withdrew with some last mutters and snarls, leaving a clean sky picked out with stars against which the windy banners of Kangchenjunga softly lit by moonlight streamed in ghostly rivalry to the starry constellations.

We awoke to a warm sun glancing benevolently over the Twins. The North-west Ridge was plastered with new snow, and our steps in the couloir had been obliterated. As there was a possibility of avalanches occurring, we decided not to renew the attempt that day, and devoted the morning to building a wall of snow blocks on the windward side of the camp. Hoerlin was not feeling well; somehow he had contracted a severe chill. Duvanel was also by no means fit, and only his devotion to his cinematographic duties had torn him away from the Base Camp.

At the head of the glacier on the ridge separating the Ramthang Peak from the North-west Ridge of Kangchenjunga is a small point about twenty thousand eight hundred feet high. This Wieland climbed by himself, using ski most of the way, and returned reporting that he had had a splendid view of the Ramthang Glacier and the North-west Ridge. It was decided, therefore, that the

whole party should ascend to this point the following day, and carefully examine the latter to see whether it was worth while persisting in the attempt to climb it.

The following morning, May 15, dawned fine. Unfortunately, Hoerlin was so ill that there was no option but for him to return to the Base Camp. This was a serious loss to the climbing party; at the same time, the prospect of getting any distance up the North-west Ridge was so utterly hopeless that it did not really matter.

After the experiences of the past fortnight, it was with something more than relief that we set out to climb something that could be climbed. It has been said that on Everest the climbing party were so heartily "fed up" with the mountain, its weather, and the effects of altitude that their sole wish was to get the job over and done with, no matter who did it. Our attitude towards Kangchenjunga was the same. I do not think there was one of us who was not sick to death of work on the mountain. At exactly what height mountaineering ceases to be pleasurable is not easily defined, the matter is rather one of individual temperament, but I do not think there is one mountaineer who has climbed on Everest or Kangchenjunga who can honestly say that he enjoyed the work. Achievement may be good for the soul, but it is not necessarily enjoyable. It was a relief to turn away from our exacting opponent for a day and *enjoy* ourselves.

The twenty thousand eight hundred feet point is easily reached along the ridge connecting it to the Ramthang Peak, but from sheer exuberance we chose to ascend by a little rock face rising from the glacier. We raced each other up by various routes, and subsided puffing and blowing on the summit. What a summit it is—one of the most extraordinary that I have ever stood upon. From the Western Tributary Glacier it appears a mere knob, an insignificant excrescence, but had we stood on the Ramthang Glacier we should have seen an "impossible" peak. Seldom have I gazed down such abysmal precipices as those falling to the Ramthang Glacier. They were as long as the south-eastern face of the Finsterahorn, and as steep as the Dolomite wall of the Winklerthurm. The seamed and wrinkled surface of the Ramthang Glacier was spread out beneath us like a relief map, and we gazed down upon it like pilots from the nose of a bombing aeroplane. The upper portion of the Ramthang Glacier rises very steeply in an almost continuous ice-fall. From the col we had reached in the North-west Ridge we had been separated by but a few hundred feet from it, but the drop from Point 20,800 must be at least four

thousand feet, and as this point is separated from the col by only about a mile, the inclination of the glacier is a steep one.

At its extreme head the Ramthang Glacier forms a snowy plain beneath the west face of the Kangbachen summit of Kangchenjunga Glacier. This face resembles closely the north face above the Kangchenjunga Glacier. There are the same impregnable ice walls stretching across it from which ice avalanches fall at least as big as those that fall from the north face. At the southern end of the face where it abuts against the main West Ridge of Kangchenjunga, which separates the head of the Ramthang Glacier from the Yalung Glacier, there appeared to be a remote possibility of ascending between the ice walls and gaining the West Ridge. But, like the route we had already tried to the North Ridge, the possibility of success was more than counterbalanced by the possibility of annihilation, for the whole of the route was liable to be swept at any moment by ice avalanches. Even if the West Ridge was gained, what then? At the best it could only lead to the Kangbachen summit. To traverse the ridge between the Kangbachen summit and the highest summit, over the third highest summit, would be beyond the powers of any party. Therefore, it can be said without hesitation that Kangchenjunga is definitely unassailable from the Ramthang Glacier.

But if this side of Kangchenjunga is disappointing as regards its climbing potentialities it is hardly so otherwise. Great tiers of ice, gleaming steeps, and terrific red granite precipices combine to form a mountain face of a magnificence and grandeur worthy of the high summits it defends.

We had looked upon the last portion of Kangchenjunga to be properly seen by man, and what we had seen but confirmed our opinion that there are no groups of mountain tops defended so impregvably as the "Five Treasures of the Snows." We tore our eyes away from those terrible ice walls and glanced for relief along the winding trench down which flows the Ramthang Glacier, and up over the sea of peaks to the west. Woolly clouds were rising from the valleys and draping themselves about the shoulders of the peaks. Once the cloudy waves rolled back; in a distant trough a great peak rose in noble solitude above the world. Someone said, "Everest." Then the mists closed in, and we saw it no more.

We turned to the North-west Ridge. Our view of it was an end-on one, but if it was impossible to gauge its length, its height and difficulty were apparent. Below us on the glacier was the camp, a mere smudge on the immaculate expanse of snow. The

terrace we must gain was four thousand feet higher. The North-west Ridge was the connecting link. I have already described its knife-like edges of ice and its rocky towers. Seen thus, end on, they were jumbled one against the other, and one gained but little idea of the real length of the ridge. Perhaps it was this that deceived Professor Dyhrenfurth into deciding to continue with the attack. To those used only to Alpine scale, it is easy to be misled by the length of these Himalayan ridges. But if the length was not apparent, the difficulties were, and one could not but wonder how porters were to be got up, and camps established along that tremendous crest. There was no answer to this question. Even supposing the upper ice wall, against which the ridge abutted, to be climbed, and the terrace gained, what next? There was no possibility whatever of reaching any of Kangchenjunga's summits. The terrace did not extend right across the mountain to the North Ridge, there was a cut-off of impassable precipices. At the best, we could only hope to reach the Kangbachen summit, and that was separated from the terrace by one thousand five hundred feet at least of formidable granite precipices. The most we could do was to climb as high as possible, perhaps even as high as the Bavarians, but what was the practical use of that? I fear my companions thought me a pessimist, but what else could one be taking everything into consideration? Anyway, the decision was made. We were to go on. This settled, we sat and lazed two or three hours away in the warm sun, happy hours, but trammelled by the thought of the morrow. The evening mists saw us jogging down the glacier to the camp.

The party that left the next morning consisted of Professor Dyhrenfurth, Schneider, Wieland and myself, with two porters, Lewa and Numa, the last named not to be confused with Nemu, my servant, both experienced Everest men. The couloir was in bad condition, and steps had to be kicked or cut through an upper layer of powdery snow a foot deep. The porters were not happy; neither of them had experienced similar climbing before. Lewa stuck gamely to the task, but Nima was constantly slipping from his steps. I was next to him on the rope, and had several times to hold him. The ridge itself was also in a worse condition than it was during our reconnaissance.

We climbed on two ropes, Schneider, Wieland, and Lewa on the first, and Professor Dyhrenfurth, Nima, and myself on the second. The duty of the second party was to drive in pitons and fix ropes to the rocks. Nima caused us some anxious moments.

It made one shudder to see the way he climbed on the loose rocks, hauling himself up on his hands without testing loose holds. So poor a show did he put up that we decided to leave him on a broad and safe part of the ridge, a decision that relieved him as much as it did us. Lewa was, however, an excellent rock climber, and followed Schneider and Wieland without difficulty to the top of the pinnacle, which had been the farthest point reached during the reconnaissance.

From the top of the pinnacle a vertical and holdless slice of granite drops to a gap. The climber must descend the granite slice on the rope, and alight on a sharp edge of snow. A piton was driven into a crack on the pinnacle, and a double rope fixed to it. Schneider and Wieland then descended hand over hand down the fixed rope, while being held at the same time from above on another rope by the remainder of the party. It was the sort of place fiction writers would make much of. Their descriptions would bristle with "unfathomable abysses," "like a fly on a wall," "beetling precipices," and so forth. The mountaineering guide-book writer would, however, describe it simply as "a twenty feet absail"\* and as a grudging compliment to the place add "sensational." In this case, however, the fiction writer would convey a better picture to the mind of even the most sophisticated reader than the guide-book writer. To add to the sensationalism might be added the fact that the cracked and disintegrating pinnacle on which we stood exhibited a distinct tremor if rudely handled. I distinctly remember thinking, a trifle morosely, what a grand finale it would make to the expedition if the thing collapsed, and toppled into the "unfathomable abyss" with its human load.

As Wieland swung over the edge, the dirty and battered topi he was accustomed to affect looked strangely incongruous in these surroundings of rock, snow and ice, and, as he bumped and rasped down the rough granite, I half hoped that it would be knocked from his head and go spinning down the precipices, arriving at the camp below a pulped and shapeless mass. No such diversion occurred, and soon he had joined Schneider in the gap on the snow ridge.

Professor Dyhrenfurth and I remained on the pinnacle for an hour or two. We were privileged in witnessing one of the finest feats of climbing we had ever seen. Immediately above the gap rose a semi-detached mass of rock; beyond was another small gap, above which rose the great pinnacle in three hundred feet of slabs

\* A German term for double roping.

set at an angle not far removed from the vertical. Ice in the interstices of these slabs had forced them apart in many places and dangerously unstable flakes rested against the face. Every ledge was loaded with snow or ice. On an Alpine climb of exceptional severity the ascent of this pinnacle would be a formidable task; at twenty-one thousand feet it seemed impossible.

Wieland ensconced himself on top of the semi-detached mass, and Schneider descended, without much difficulty, into the secondary gap, and began the ascent of the slabs. Methodically he worked his way upwards. The exertion of hard rock climbing at such an altitude was obviously severe, and after each upward heave he was forced to halt and rest. At length he reached a small stance, a tiny triangular recess, where Wieland joined him. Above this rose a slanting crack formed by the edge of a projecting flake the upper part of which bulged out unpleasantly. It was not a place to linger over, and Schneider did not linger. A foot scrape on the wall, a hand wedged in the crack, a quick upward caterpillar-like movement with naught but tiny hand-holds to prevent a backward topple, and the hardest part had been accomplished. In the silence, unbroken save by an occasional whisper of wind, I could hear the sibilant sucking in of breath by sorely stressed lungs. A few feet more of difficult, but not such exacting climbing brought him to a sloping shelf. Wieland followed, and although burdened by both ice-axes and a rucksack, he came up without relying on the rope.

So far, so good. For a few feet the work was easier; then the slopes steepened once more. In places they were dangerously ice glazed, and their sloping icy shelves were masked by snow. Ice-axes were called into play to clear holds. Now and again loose flakes of rock were dislodged. Hurtling madly down the cliffs they loosed other rocks and sent the echoes thundering.

Two hours' work, two hundred feet of ascent, such was the climbing on the great pinnacle. Professor Dyhrenfurth and I watched the struggle with intense interest. It was, probably, the finest piece of rock climbing ever done at such an altitude. We forgot for the moment that the real problem was not the ascent of the ridge by the Europeans but the establishing of camps and the getting up of porters over this gaunt backbone of rock and ice.

The weather restored pessimism, grey mists came flying up from the west, a chill wind sobbed over the ridge, driving before it small moths of snow. Schneider and Wieland were out of sight now. Occasionally we could hear their voices, whilst an

occasional stone crashed out news of their advance. We rose, stretched our cramped limbs, tied on Lewa, and started to descend.

We had collected Nima but were still above the col when we were startled by an enormous roar. Millions of tons of ice had broken away from the ice wall and were thundering down to the Ramthang Glacier. Instantly, the whole upper basin of the glacier was filled with a writhing hurricane of snow. Whirling up at us, it enveloped us in a blizzard, that whitened and sheeted our clothes in snow. The sky was darkened; the whole district seemed filled with wind-blown snow dislodged by this monstrous avalanche.

Such an avalanche, had it occurred in the Alps would command widespread attention, newspapers would refer to it as a "Cataclysm of Nature," and questions would be asked in the Swiss Parliament about it. But on Kangchenjunga, such avalanches are not the exception, but the rule—almost an everyday occurrence.

Kangchenjunga is by no means the only Himalayan peak to discharge avalanches of such magnitude, but it is probably safe to say that there is no other Himalayan peak that discharges them with such frequency. This is due, of course, to its great snowfall, the quick downward movement of its glaciers. A good instance of the size of a Himalayan avalanche is that which occurred during the late A. F. Mummery's attempt on Nanga Parbat. The party had bivouacked on a rock rib which projected some five hundred feet from the mountainside, but when they returned to their bivouac site after an unsuccessful attempt on the mountain, they found that their gear had been swept away by an ice avalanche. The avalanche had fallen diagonally and taken the five hundred feet rib in its stride! The size and destructive power of Himalayan avalanches is the first thing that should be studied when climbing in the Himalayas. A purely Alpine-trained mountaineer finds it difficult to appreciate the scale on which such avalanches occur. Mummery paid the penalty of not realizing this when he made his final and disastrous attempt on Nanga Parbat. No trace of him and his two Gurkha followers was ever discovered. We narrowly missed paying the same penalty too, and had we been wiped out during our attempt to reach the North Ridge of Kangchenjunga, we should have received our just deserts.

It must be remembered that Himalayan ice avalanches *habitually* sweep the whole breadth of glaciers. To illustrate this I can but add that were the peaks in the vicinity of the well-known Concordia Hut in the Bernese Oberland enlarged to Himalayan scale, the mountaineer staying at the hut would not be safe from ice avalanches

falling from the peaks on the opposite side of the Aletsch Glacier.

It was a relief to leave the rotten rocks, and to stand once more in the col; and it was pleasant to escape from the cutting wind, and seizing the fixed rope that hung down the steep upper part of the couloir step blithely down the ladder of holds to the camp.

We glissaded down the lower part of the couloir, and for the first time that day Nima's worried expression gave place to a broad grin of delight. The porters are children at heart, and they have all the enthusiasm for a glissade down snow that a child has for a toboggan. For the benefit of the uninitiated I should explain that there are two methods of glissading. One is to stand upright, and the other is to sit down. The former is best employed on hard snow, the latter on soft snow. A certain degree of expertness is necessary for the stand-up glissade. Many commence in elegant style. With ever increasing speed, they slide down the slope. Presently, as the speed becomes faster and faster, they become flustered. From stability, they are reduced to instability; their elegance, their dignified deportment is lost, their balance is upset, they struggle wildly to regain it, then the snow comes up and hits them on the nose. They go head over heels, their ice-axes are snatched from their hands, their hats torn from their heads, their rucksacks wind themselves round their necks, endeavouring to strangle them, snow is forced down their collars, up their sleeves, and into their pockets and trousers. Over and over they go in a series of somersaults, to subside finally at the bottom where they rise to their feet vowing it was good fun.

There is one other variety of glissade worthy of mention, and that is glissading on a rope. This is one degree worse than skiing on a rope. What usually happens is this: the leader, without troubling to enquire whether the second man is ready, shoots off with great velocity, despite the agonized cries of the latter. In a moment or two, the rope tightens on the second man who has barely had time to start, snatching him forward on to his head, and squeezing the breath out of him. The jerk arrests the leader, who hurls an uncomplimentary remark over his shoulder at the unfortunate second man, who meanwhile slides, or somersaults pell-mell past the leader. Then, before the leader has time to continue, he is in his turn dragged in the wake of the second man. And so it goes on, a vicious cycle, until they have reached the bottom, where they sit in the snow roundly abusing one another.

We reached camp in desultory snow squalls. Mists concealed the North-west Ridge, but now and again they blew aside and we



scanned the rocks a little anxiously for signs of Schneider and Wieland. It was not until evening that we saw them descending, mere dots silhouetted against the jagged skyline. Dusk was falling when they returned. They reported immense difficulties, difficulties both of rocks and ice. Short of roping the great tower up from top to bottom, there was no possibility of getting the porters up it, and even with ropes, it would most likely prove impossible for laden men. The prospect of farther advance beyond the tower was doubtful in the extreme. The whole crest of the first knife-like ice ridge would have to be hacked away before a passage could be won. At the end of this ridge, there was another tower, not so high as the first, but more difficult, in fact, probably impassable. Its summit was capped by a boss of ice which flowed down its sides like icing on a cake. There was no avoiding this tower, for the precipices on either side were sheer and offered no hope of a traverse. Above this tower, other ice ridges rose, a whole series of them, up to the terrace. Nowhere, said Schneider, was there a place on which a camp might be pitched. There were not even any ice pinnacles of a type suitable for bivouac caves. And the weather? What would be the position of a party caught high up on this great ridge in bad weather or high winds? The storm on the glacier three nights previously had been bad enough, but what would it have been like on the ridge? Retreat would be impossible. It would probably mean two weeks hard work to reach the terrace, even supposing camps could be established, and porters brought up, and by then the monsoon would most likely have broken. Each of these facts taken separately was sufficiently weighty to militate against any attempt.

There was no alternative but to abandon the project, and the following day Wieland and I accomplished the dreary task of collecting and bringing down the fixed ropes. Kangchenjunga had beaten us, beaten us not by bad weather, so much as by sheer difficulty. We had examined every portion of the faces above the Kangchenjunga and Ramthang Glaciers. Nowhere was there a chink in the armour of the giant; nowhere was there a route at which the mountaineer might look and say, "Well, it *might* go." Others sceptical as to the truth of these assertions may follow in our footsteps, but they too will return disappointed, and tremble, even as the ground trembles, at the roar of the great ice avalanches that seek their destruction, and like us, their hope and optimism will be ruthlessly crushed beneath the icy heel of Kangchenjunga.

# SABOTAGE

By

CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN

*Captain Von Rintelen is the famous German Secret Agent. He describes here his adventures in America, where he was sent to put a stop to the traffic in munitions to the Allies.*

I STARTED from the Stettiner Bahnhof, on which the German flag was flying in honour of the birthday of the emperor, William I, on March 22, 1915. As soon as I was settled in the train I began a task which looked very funny but which had a serious purpose. I wrote postcards to all my acquaintances, dozens of picture postcards to my friends, particularly the Military and Naval Attachés of neutral states. These cards I sent to other friends, in envelopes, with the request that they should post them, so that the Attachés and all the people from whom I wanted to hide my tracks, received cards from "Somewhere in Flanders," from Upper Bavaria, and from Silesia. Upon my arrival at Christiania I succeeded in obtaining at the British and American Consulates magnificent genuine visas for my Swiss passport, and I felt safe. When the steamer was on high seas a British cruiser sent a lieutenant and a couple of sailors on board to see if the ship was harbouring any Germans. The lieutenant ascertained that there were no Germans on board. As we approached the American coast I grew a little uneasy, for the British cruiser *Essex* was stationed off New York—three miles and two inches off. She was commanded by Captain Watson, who had been Naval Attaché in Berlin until shortly before the outbreak of war. We had been friends. I was lucky, however, for the *Essex* was not inspecting the passenger boats on that day.

Once around these "dangerous corners," I at last landed, safe and sound, on the pier in New York.

Where I should have been met by Malvin Rice, who was to take me by the arm and show me where I should find the powder ready for "spot" delivery . . . there was no Malvin Rice at all. The whole edifice which he had constructed before my eyes disappeared *fata Morgana*-wise.

So I stood there on that pier of New York, entirely alone, left

to my own wits, but bent upon going through with what seemed ill-starred at the beginning. Single-handed I now ventured an attack against the forty-eight United States!

I moved into a modest but good hotel, the Great Northern, in Fifty-seventh Street, and began to make inquiries with a view to discovering whether it was really possible to buy sufficient explosives seriously to damage the manufacture of munitions for the Allies. I went to several firms and told them that I was a German agent anxious to purchase powder, but within a few days I was satisfied that it would be quite impossible to buy up the vast quantities of explosives that were by now available in the American market.

I began to lead a dual existence. In the evening I went about as "myself" in dress suit and white tie; I had decided that it was much more dangerous to go about New York under a false name. For, if one of the numerous English agents should find out somehow who I actually was, he would know instantly that I had something nefarious up my sleeve. If, however, I did not conceal my identity, it would be assumed that I was in America on some peaceful economic mission. Otherwise, it would be argued, I should have kept behind the scenes.

During the day I dressed unobtrusively and went first of all through the whole dock district, where I saw numerous English, French, and Russian transports waiting to take munitions on board. I watched them being loaded, and saw them steam out of the harbour and make for the east, their holds full of shells. I wished them at the bottom of the sea.

My own grim and sturdy resolution was only strengthened by the sight of those ships. But without wishing to be vainglorious, I felt "I want what I want when I want it."

Systematically I studied the conditions in the New York docks, and I soon became aware that a large number of German sailors, mates, and captains were hanging about the harbour with nothing to do. The merchantmen in which they would otherwise be serving lay in dock and were unable to leave, since they would be captured by the British on the high seas.

It occurred to me that a large proportion of the dockers consisted of Irishmen, who were far from friendly to England or those allied to her. Those men openly gave vent to their anger whenever they saw a transport leaving with munitions and did not care who heard them.

Who on earth could bring me in touch with these Irishmen?

I went to see the German Consul-General Falcke, a splendid man with vast knowledge and experience, who was also convinced—contrary to what the Embassy imagined—that America would soon join the Allied cause anyhow; so whatever I should suggest he would be only too willing to help. Unfortunately, his health was not of the very best at that time, and a few months later he had to return to Germany.

I soon found out that there was one man in New York who was trusted not only by the German seamen, but also by the Irish. This was Dr. Bünz; he had formerly been German Consul in New York and now represented the Hamburg-American Line. I called on him, for we had known each other for years, and he had already begun to work for the German cause. He had instructions to charter ships, which were loaded with coal and reconnoitred the high seas in order to transfer this coal to German cruisers at certain given places. To render this possible, Bünz was in permanent telegraphic communication, in code of course, with the German authorities at home. When I saw him he told me that it would be useful if I could furnish him with detonators.

"Detonators? What do you want detonators for?"

"Well, you see," said Dr. Bünz, "my people want a change. I must tell you what my methods are. I charter a tramp steamer, the captain receives a couple of thousand dollars, and disappears. In his place I engage one of the numerous officers of the German mercantile marine who are compelled to hang about idle, and, as you know, these men generally belong to the Naval Reserve—that is to say, they are now on active service; and they want to get into action. My men have asked me to provide them with detonators. When they are sailing about on the open sea, waiting for the cruisers in order to hand over their coal, they find that time hangs heavily on their hands, so they have thought out a neat plan. If they have detonators and meet another tramp taking shells to Europe, they will hoist the war-flag, send over an armed party, bring back the crew as prisoners, and blow up the ship with its cargo. So, my dear captain, please get me some detonators."

I had no objection to Dr. Bünz's men sinking munition transports; but where in New York could I procure detonators without drawing unwelcome attention to myself? The Consul had, however, done me a very important service. He gave me the address of a capable man, an export merchant whose business had suffered through the War. This was Mr. Max Weiser, and I soon found that he knew his way about New York harbour. I put him to a

severe test and saw that he was not only a man who had had a finger in many pies, but was also thoroughly reliable. Though it was possible to stage my plans from my hotel room, we hit on the idea of setting up first of all as honest merchants. We founded a firm which we called "E. V. Gibbons' Inc." the initials being the same as those of my Swiss pseudonym. We rented an office of two rooms in Cedar Street, in the heart of the financial quarter of New York, and entered the name of the company in the Commercial Register as an import and export firm. I sat in one of our two rooms as a director of the concern, and in the other sat my "staff." While I was still wondering how to get hold of the detonators, and in fact how to further my plans at all, I happened to find the right man. I had by now established contact with all sorts of "shady" characters, some of whom had secret schemes, and one day I was visited by the German chemist, Dr. Scheele. I received him in my newly furnished office, in the first room of which sat Max Weiser dictating to the stenographer the most fearsome business letters. He was inviting all the firms of New York to send us offers of wheat, peas, shoe polish, glassware, rice, and similar goods. We posted piles of letters, so that our firm might present the appearance of a flourishing concern.

Through this room came Dr. Scheele. He began by presenting a strong letter of recommendation from our Military Attaché Captain Papen, and continued by saying that I was a man with varied interests, and that he was a chemist, with a new invention which he would like to offer me. I saw that he was rather hesitant, so I moved my chair nearer and told him that he had come to the right place and had only to reveal to me the purpose of his invention; if it were any good, he could be sure that I would acquire it; for the rest, I was the most discreet man in New York, and he could trust me. He plucked up courage, took a piece of lead out of his pocket, which was as big as a cigar, laid it on my desk and began to explain.

This piece of lead was hollow inside. Into the middle of the tube a circular disc of copper had been pressed and soldered, dividing it into two chambers. One of these chambers was filled with picric acid, the other with sulphuric acid or some other inflammable liquid. A strong plug made of wax with a simple lead cap made both ends airtight. The copper disc could be as thick or thin as we pleased. If it were thick, the two acids on either side took a long time to eat their way through. If it were thin, the mingling of the two acids would occur within a few days. By

regulating the thickness of the disc it was possible to determine the time when the acids should come together. This formed a safe and efficient time-fuse. When the two acids mingled at the appointed time, a silent but intense flame, from twenty to thirty centimetres long, shot out from both ends of the tube, and while it was still burning the lead casing melted away without a trace: *spurlos!*

We soon came to terms. He was first given a round cheque in return for allowing me to use the "cigar" in any way I wished. I asked him to return on the following day, and in the meantime I secured a few assistants—captains of German ships with whom I had already become good friends, and Irishmen whose "approval" I had won. The Irishmen had no idea who I was, nor did they ask me. It was sufficient for them that I was not very friendly towards England. I collected these men together, and took them to my office. I was sure that I could trust them, and they did not disappoint me. I came straight to the point and explained to them that I had found a means of stopping the hated shipments of munitions, and one which would not infringe American neutrality as far as I was concerned. The construction of the "cigars" was explained to them, and I inquired if it were possible to smuggle them unobserved on to the transports which were carrying explosives to Europe. They were unanimously of the opinion that this could be very easily arranged, and had no scruples since the incendiary bombs would not go off till the vessels were outside American territorial waters. They were full of enthusiasm for my plan, and wanted to take a few bombs with them at once. They were very disappointed when they heard that the things had to be manufactured first of all on a large scale. We put on our hats and went to the docks. We discussed the possibility of finding a workshop in which we could manufacture our bombs without being discovered. This presented great difficulties, and as we walked along we could think of no way to overcome them.

We were faced with a difficulty. Where could the fire-bombs be manufactured?

A great many things had to be taken into consideration. In the first place, I insisted that under no circumstances must anything be done on American territory proper. Such things as docks and decks, tugs and trawlers, piers and ports . . . all these, with my notions of which I could put forward, in case of need, in an American court, I could work on. But not on American territory! I was informed that a man named Boniface would be able to overcome, by hook or by crook, such minor legal obstacles as the

definition of where American territory ended and where the high seas began. Of course, there was always the problem of "territorial waters." But that was a small matter. It was my duty and my exclusive task to see that these transports of munitions were stopped, or at least impeded. It was not my job to get around legal points which might be presented by the American Secret Service, or to brood over such things as courts and district attorneys. That could be done by others.

Mr. Boniface came strolling into my room—Mr. Boniface, who was always and at any time prepared to hear the most startling and daring suggestions. Serious and thoughtful elderly gentleman as he was, full of dignity and stateliness whenever legal points were presented to him, he became almost doubly bewigged in his importance. He shook his head, and once more shook his head.

"Well, Captain . . . Let me think . . . 231 . . . Article VIII of the Hague Convention speaks entirely against your line of thought. Grave doubts are in my mind as to whether your attitude could be absolutely approved of. I must state most emphatically, upon mature reflection, that such things as violating American neutrality should not enter your mind."

Thus spoke Mr. Boniface.

He noticed the perplexity in my face, and the consideration that something more "substantial" than the advice of learned counsel might yield him the harvest of a few attractive bills containing several noughts, deprived him suddenly of his dignity. He ran out of the room and disappeared.

Less than half an hour later he turned up again, disseminating as usual a slight odour of whisky. As always when he was in high spirits, his pince-nez were slightly off the straight.

"Why not manufacture your bombs on one of those interned ships?" he suggested. "I have brought you the right man to attend to it—Captain von Kleist, an old friend of yours."

Kleist was on the best terms with a great many of the captains and officers of the interned vessels, and he developed without more ado a magnificent plan, a plan pregnant with unlimited possibilities.

We were to transplant ourselves, with all our schemes, devices, and enterprises, on board one of the German ships and thus place ourselves in a most admirable situation. Germany within American territorial waters! What possibilities!

Kleist knew all the interned German sailors. He could size them all up, and with a wave of the hand he gave me an estimate of

the character of each man, from the general manager to the youngest boy.

A few of them were weaklings. Some of them were born underlings. But some—and it was a joy to hear it!—the vast majority were men of steel. Men who did not care for anything and would dare everything.

"Well, Kleist, this is going to be something out of the ordinary. We must find a ship where the captain will play the game, where the crew will abide by orders given, and where, above all, the whole crowd will keep their mouths shut."

Kleist reflected.

"Well, I know of one fine ship, where I am acquainted with the officers and engineers, and I am sure they will keep their mouths shut. They are just a wee bit more enterprising than a good many others, and it is an enterprising spirit that you are after, is it not?"

"Of course! Unless there are some daredevils on board, I have no use for the ship. You will soon see that the daredevil spirit is the only one that can enable us to win the war. Look at the *Emden*! Didn't she win almost as much admiration from the enemy as she did at home? I must have men with 'pep.' That's the main thing!"

Kleist banged his fist on the table. "I think I've got it! It is the steamship *Friedrich der Grosse* you want!"

"*Friedrich der Grosse*! Splendid! Splendid! Do you know that a *Friedrich der Grosse* is the flagship of our high seas fleet in home waters?"

"Of course I do—but what does that matter?"

"It's the flagship"—my enthusiasm ran away with me—" *Friedrich der Grosse*—what a wonderful combination! *Friedrich der Grosse*! *Der Grosse König*! Our great king!"

All our plans were gradually laid and the right men were in the right places, when one afternoon early in May—this was in 1915—an upheaval of the first magnitude occurred—the *Lusitania* was sunk. Most unfortunately, and contrary to all expectations that the very construction of such a magnificent vessel would keep her afloat for hours, and thus give ample time for rescue ships to take on all the passengers, some internal explosion occurred, and down she went, taking with her so many human beings. Whether it is true or not that the American customs authorities had given her legal clearance papers, although she was not entitled to such legality—all this will quite probably remain a secret for ever.



Mr. Dudley Field Malone, the chief of customs of New York, was ordered to send all documents relating to the *Lusitania* to Washington, to the department of state. What these documents really would have proved is an entirely different story.

However, despite the arguments as to whether the *Lusitania* was, or was not a munition carrier, no embargo was placed on the export of munitions, and we simply *had* to carry on!

My assistants came in the evenings, and we discussed in my office what we should do next. The Irish had already thought out a plan. They knew their countrymen who worked in the docks as stevedores and lighter-men and told me that these people were willing to plant our "cigars" on British munition transports. They had even chosen a ship, the *Phæbus*, which was to sail in a few days, and whose hold was packed with shells. I opened the drawer of my desk which contained the case of detonators, and it was soon emptied. Next morning the dockers who were in the plot carried their barrels, cases, and sacks on board the *Phæbus*, and as soon as they had assured themselves that they were unobserved, they bent down swiftly in a dark corner of the hold and hid one of our detonators among the cargo. When the *Phæbus* left for Archangel, with a cargo of high explosive shells on board, it carried two of these destructive articles in each of three holds.

I walked unobtrusively past the steamer while my men were at work, looked down the opened hatchways, through which the cases of shells were being lowered, and saw the British agents who were standing guard on deck, carbines slung across their arms ready to prevent anything suspicious from approaching their valuable cargoes. That evening my assistants came to the office. They were in good humour, and reported that the *Phæbus* was to sail on the next day, and that they had placed detonators in some other ships too, which were to leave harbour a few days later. We had now used up all our supply, and Dr. Scheele was instructed to prepare some more.

We sat in our office and waited for the first success. We had subscribed to the *Shipping News*, which printed the daily reports of Lloyd's in London concerning everything to do with shipping and shipping insurance. We had calculated the date on which the accident was to take place, but a few days passed and there was still nothing about the *Phæbus* in the paper. Suddenly we saw:

"*Accidents.* S.S. *Phæbus* from New York—destination Archangel—caught fire at sea. Brought into port of Liverpool by H.M.S. *Ajax*."

This was our first success, and everything had happened just as we had planned. Our dockers had of course only put the detonators in the holds which contained no munitions, for we had no intention of blowing up the ship from neutral territory. If we had wished to do so we could have used different means, but we achieved our purpose without the cost of human life. When the ship caught fire on the open sea the captain naturally had the munition hold flooded to eliminate the most serious danger. None of the ships reached its port of destination, and most of them sank after the crew had been taken off by other vessels. In every case the explosives were flooded and rendered useless.

After this success I extended my organization. Dr. Scheele worked day and night to manufacture detonators, and results continued to be gratifying. The number of accidents at sea reported in Lloyd's *Shipping List* increased, and the *New York Times* published on its front page an item of news which cheered us. On July 5 the Russian Minister Prince Miliukov had delivered a speech in the Duma regretting that the delay in the transport of munitions from America was becoming more and more serious, and that it would be necessary to take firm steps to discover the cause, and trap the miscreants who were responsible for it.

We were greatly encouraged by this, for it showed us that we were successfully paralysing the transport of munitions to Russia and helping our troops on the battlefields; so we continued to place bomb after bomb. I founded "branches" in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and, gradually, in the southern ports of the United States. It was difficult to get our detonators to these towns, for they had to be hidden in the luggage of our confidential agents who travelled regularly round those ports. My most fanatical helpers in this way were the Irish. They swarmed about the various ports with detonators in their pockets and lost no opportunity of having a smack at an English ship. They still did not know who I was, for they had been told that I was connected with Irish Home Rule organizations. I soon, however, had to refrain from employing them, for in their blind hatred of England they had begun to use their bombs in a way we had not intended, and which was dangerous.

But the clouds, however, were gathering above our heads, and things were beginning to get awkward. The "cigar" business was getting too hot for us. I was rung up in the middle of the night in my hotel bedroom and I recognized the voice of Mr. Boniface at the other end. He did not tell me what was wrong,

but gave me a rendezvous where I could meet him on the following morning before I went to the office. I turned up punctually and heard from Boniface that since the previous evening the New York police had been manifesting feverish activity. The docks were swarming with detectives, looking for a band of men who were placing bombs on ships. Boniface was sure of his facts, for he had got them from a confederate at police headquarters. We walked past the docks, discussing the possible reasons for these sudden measures, and my eye lit on the front page of the *New York Times*, which I had just bought. We were in for it! The newspaper announced with large and sensational headlines that when the empty hold of the steamer *Kirk Oswald* was being swept out in Marseilles Harbour, a peculiar little tube had been found, which on closer examination proved to be an extremely dangerous incendiary bomb. This bomb must have been deposited while the boat was moored at New York, and it was at once obvious how the numerous conflagrations at sea during the last few months had been caused. The paper announced at the same time that the whole Secret Service department of the New York police was at work to seize the miscreants, and that a clue was being pursued which offered good prospects of success.

I remembered that my men really had placed a bomb on the *Kirk Oswald*, but I also knew that the steamer was destined for Archangel. It was clear to me that she had received fresh orders on the way and had taken her cargo to Marseilles instead, and that the bomb had not gone off because we had timed it to explode at a later stage on her long journey to Archangel.

I had an appointment that morning in the lobby of my hotel, and, as I left, I saw that I was being watched. Two men, whom I had seen in the lobby, were following me. I drove to a remote quarter of the town and saw that I was not mistaken, for I was still being shadowed. As I walked along, the two men kept on my tracks, at a suitable distance, and when I saw a taxi and had ascertained that there was no other car anywhere near I jumped in and drove off. It was necessary to disappear for a time, and after we had hurriedly arranged how to keep in touch my staff scattered in all directions. I looked out a quiet watering-place not far from New York and awaited events; but nothing happened. Since no more bombs were being laid, the police had no opportunity of making a discovery. Still, I felt a "need of privacy."

My little retreat was not far from Stamford in the State of Connecticut, and I took up my quarters in a small hotel, where I

enjoyed the sea and the sunshine and renewed my energies preparatory to returning in due course to New York. I had registered in the visitors' book as Mr. Brannon, from England, kept to myself and spoke to nobody, but received daily letters from New York, which kept me posted as to what was happening there. I was yearning to return to the scene of operations, but caution compelled me to keep away for some time. My agents wrote me that the man who had drawn the attention of the New York police to the gang which was supposed to be making the docks unsafe, was Captain G——, the British Naval Attaché at Washington. The investigations of the police, however, had only enabled them to report that it had not been possible to discover any proof of the truth of his allegations. Captain G—— had applied for a whole detachment of detectives to be sent out from England, who were to work on their own initiative and under his direction, for the purpose of capturing the conspirators. The Attaché himself intended to collect the proofs which would enable the New York police to intervene. The detectives had arrived and among them were officials from Scotland Yard who understood their job. Boniface had discovered that they were following a definite clue, and my men in New York were worried, for it was possible that the Scotland Yard men were on the right track.

As I lay on the beach reading this report, the problem began to give me a headache. If the police really had found something out, it was too risky to deposit any more of our incendiary bombs. We should have to liquidate our whole scheme, and others would have to finish what we had begun. The English detectives would be waiting for our next move in order to catch us, though if they were not really on our track, we could continue with our work in spite of Captain G—— and his men from Scotland Yard.

That afternoon I drove along the coast to another watering-place a little distance away. It was more fashionable and elegant, and slightly less sleepy than the retreat in which I had hidden myself. I walked up and down in deep thought and finally landed on a terrace of a small hotel. A jazz band was playing, and I drank iced coffee while I racked my brains to find a means of discovering what Captain G—— did and did not know of our activities.

I suddenly looked up and saw two ladies standing in front of me, who knew me. They were ignorant of my name and who I was, and their knowledge of me rested only on a chance meeting at a society function in New York. We had met at a late hour in

the evening, and I remembered that only the host had known who I was, none of the guests having any inkling of my real identity. The two ladies recognized me and came up to my table. They were Mrs. James B—— and Miss Mabel L——. Mrs. B——, who was the older of the two, was the wife of a coal merchant in New York, and Miss L——, who was young and very pretty, was "her best friend." They told me that they were very glad to see me, for there were many more ladies than men in the place, and I gathered that they did not have any accurate remembrance of my name. I hastened to inform them that it was Brannon, and they remembered immediately that it was.

We discussed a variety of things: water sports, the war, the new dances, the stock exchange, and religion; and I then learned that they were staying at the hotel on the terrace of which we were sitting. They told me that a large party was being given in the hotel on the following evening, for which invitations had already been sent out, and they asked me to come along. It appeared to be difficult to round up enough dancing men, and the ladies reckoned on my co-operation in the entertainment. I had no desire to go, for I had other things on my mind, until Miss L—— surprised me by saying:

"Some nice people are coming. You are English, aren't you? You will be interested, Captain G——, the attaché at your embassy, will be there. He is a charming person. Do you know him? No? Well, *do* come. You will find him easy to get on with."

I looked out over the sea. The orchestra was playing softly. My two companions began to devour pastries in large quantities. On the spur of the moment I decided to take a great risk in order to find out what I wanted to know.

"Yes," I said, "I shall be very glad to come."

They told me that the hotel was small but very fashionable, and that you could only be accepted as a guest if you were recommended by a member of New York society. Most of the apartments were already booked for a long time ahead. All the visitors knew each other and they formed a private club.

I moved into this fashionable hotel on the following morning, having been recommended by both the ladies. We sat on the beach together and went for walks, and I may repeat that Miss L—— was really very young and very pretty, while Mrs. B—— manifested a tact which appeared to have been acquired from a familiarity with difficult situations. We passed the day in complete harmony.

In the evening, when the ladies were wearing their best gowns and the gentlemen appeared in all the elegance and dignity of swallow-tails, the moment arrived for which I had waited. Mrs. B—— introduced me to the British Naval Attaché. I was informed that I had the pleasure of meeting Captain G——, and the Attaché was informed that he had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Brannon.

After Mrs. B—— had left us, we stood at one of the large windows that opened on to the sea. The Attaché was obviously trying to think of some pleasant remark to make to his countryman. He was tall, broad-shouldered, with a clever face expressive of great energy, and was leaning out of the window a little to breathe in the sea air.

I began to put my plan into action.

"I am Commander Brannon, sir, and have been sent to the United States to study a new torpedo invention. I heard something yesterday in New York that I wished to communicate to you personally, but you had already left, and I thought that it might wait until your return."

"Oh," said the Attaché, "I'm glad to meet you out here, then!"

"They only know here that I am an Englishman," I put in hastily; "but they have no idea that I am in the Navy, and it is not necessary for them to discover it."

"You are right," said the Attaché; "but tell me, commander, what was it you wished to report to me?"

I pulled myself together. Now was the moment.

"A certain Captain Johnson, in charge of an English transport, has informed me of the strange incident of which he was a witness. He saw five men carrying heavy cases through the docks a few days ago, and as their behaviour looked rather odd he followed them for a couple of hundred yards. They loaded their mysterious cases into a motor-boat and shot off into the harbour. It was a clear night and he saw them draw alongside a vessel which had been loading munitions, in order presumably to go out to sea next day. The strange thing was that these men, together with their cases, were taken on board by means of a crane. The vessel sailed, but in the morning, before it left the harbour, Johnson called on the captain to tell him what he had seen. And what do you think happened? Not a soul on the whole ship admitted having seen the five men—neither the officer of the watch, nor any of the crew, nor our detectives. Don't you think there was something queer about it?"

Captain G—— had listened very attentively. "Tell me," he said, "did your confidant see any of these five fellows sufficiently clearly to recognize him again? Was he close enough to notice how they were dressed, and did he describe to you what they looked like?"

I regretted that Captain Johnson, who had already gone off to sea again, had told me no more than I had imparted to the Attaché, and that I had no more helpful information to divulge.

"I thought it would interest you," I said. "We have heard so much in the last few weeks about acts of sabotage against our ships."

"Yes, of course," replied Captain G——; "of course it interests me. I suppose you have read that we have definite suspicions. There is a gang working in New York Harbour under the direction of a German officer. We even know his name. He is called Rintelen, and has been mentioned a number of times in wireless messages by the German Embassy. The strange thing is, however, that the American police stick to their statement that he is a gentleman who is not doing anything criminal, and yet my men have often seen him hanging about the docks. He even admitted his identity once in a tavern, when he was drunk, and hadn't a hold on his tongue. He did not give away any details concerning his activities, but it is certain that he owns a motor boat, and runs about in it for days together selling goods of all kinds to the ships in the harbour. I cannot tell you any more, commander, but I can promise you that he will soon be in our hands."

"Yes, that's not likely to be a difficult job," I said, laughing internally till it hurt. "A fellow who gets drunk and lets his tongue run away with him, and sails about the harbour openly in a motor boat, must be easy to trap."

The jazz band broke into our conversation, and I had to dance with Miss L——. She found me a delightful companion, for I was very elated, and I had good reason to be.

It is true that I knew the English suspected me, though I had no idea how they came to believe that I was accustomed to getting drunk in waterside taverns, and that I was doing business in a motor boat. Naturally I did not like being under suspicion, but it was inevitable sooner or later, and it did not matter so much since at the same time they believed such glorious nonsense about my character. It was obvious that they were not aware of the identity either of the instigators or the tools concerned in our plot; in other words, that they were on the wrong track, chasing a

phantom which they believed, for heaven knows what reasons, to be identical with myself. The ground began to burn under my feet: I could now return to New York and resume my activities.

Next morning all the king's horses could not have kept me in the place, and I left for New York as soon as I could. I put my luggage in the cloakroom at the station and tried to re-establish contact with my men. After some vain attempts I found one of the German captains. We met "down-town" and he was so brimful of courage that I poured out my heart to him, and we decided to resume full activity on the following day.

The following morning I cautiously began to resume contact with my other agents. I met them in different parts of the town, and the whole day, as I went about, I could not forget the absurd story that G—— had told me concerning my hanging about the water-side tavern and selling things from a motor boat. I spent the evening at the restaurant in the Woolworth building with a number of my best men, including Max Weiser and a couple of German captains. They laughed uproariously when I told them the story and were genuinely amused, but were unable to suggest how to get at the kernel of truth which must certainly lie at the root of it. There were so many gentlemen who drank too much in the dockside taverns, and there were so many gentlemen who did business in the harbour. We had no clue to the mystery. On the following day I had an appointment with Mr. Boniface, who was to report to me what news there was at police headquarters. We met at a little café, and he looked more glum than ever. His face registered suppressed wrath, and he dumbfounded me by severely taking me to task.

"It isn't my business, captain," he said, "to tell you what you ought to do, and I should never have thought that you could behave so. I should never have believed that you could be so careless."

I lost my temper.

"Don't talk in riddles, man. What have I done? What has happened? Out with it!"

"You got drunk," said Boniface gloomily. "You got very drunk, and said you were the German captain who sets the ships on fire."

This was beyond a joke.

"If you dare to tell me that I also sail about the harbour in a motor boat, I shall get rude."

Boniface almost wept as he polished his pince-nez.



"What good will it do you, captain," he complained, "to be rude to a poor old man who only wishes you well? What good will it do you? Take my advice and be more cautious. What do you want in the harbour, captain? There's nothing for you to do there and you only attract attention to yourself."

"How do you know all this?"

"The whole of the police force knows it. At police headquarters they talk of nothing else. All the detectives are discussing it—morning, noon, and night."

"Mr. Boniface!" I said. "Mr. Boniface! Just listen to me. I have never been drunk in New York. I have never said that I am a German captain who sets ships on fire. And I have never sailed about the harbour in a motor boat."

Mr. Boniface put on his glasses and adjusted his hat.

"It is a great pity that we have to part, captain. You have ceased to trust me. Why not honestly confess that you made a mistake that might happen to anybody, and we could then consider how to cover it up."

I was no longer angry. I began to laugh.

"But, Mr. Boniface, what shall I do to convince you? I have never in my life——"

To my surprise Boniface grew very serious and said: "I have heard that gentlemen of your rank in Germany are accustomed in such cases to swear on their word of honour."

"All right: on my word of honour, Mr. Boniface."

I then heard the absurd story for the second time, and Boniface assured me that the whole of the New York police were looking for the German Captain Rintelen who rolled about the docks and sailed about the harbour. I questioned him carefully and learned that he had obtained the most exact information from a certain official who had seen the alleged captain.

"You must find out, Mr. Boniface, what is known about him. Find out the minutest details, so that we can ourselves have a look at the fellow who has been trumpeting forth his activities."

Boniface grew thoughtful. "It will cost money," he suggested. "I shall have to knock the policeman down first."

"Don't be ridiculous."

"Don't worry, captain. I'll knock him down with a thousand dollars."

It was worth a thousand dollars. I gave Boniface the money, and he knocked his man down the same evening.

He telephoned me to meet him, and I found him very excited

and rather ashamed. What he had to tell me was indeed queer. The police had been after me since noon, when I had gone out in my motor boat, and I was at this moment sailing about the harbour. The police wanted to catch me climbing secretly on board a ship to deposit an incendiary bomb.

I shook my head in bewilderment, and sent for one of my captains to come down to the docks with me and cross the Hudson to Hoboken. Boniface went ahead and we followed.

Boniface knew the exact spot where the detectives were waiting to shadow me when I should draw alongside in my boat. Their intention was to ransack the motor boat for incendiary bombs. Even before we arrived we could see a couple of men in bowlers leaning against the railings of a jetty. We went round them in a wide circle and stole into the surrounding darkness to await events. First came a woman, who remained standing for a time on the quay near the jetty and then began to walk up and down, with her eyes fixed on the waters of the harbour. Then a motor boat drew alongside. The two men had meanwhile disappeared, but we saw them crouching behind a railway train. A man emerged from the boat carrying a couple of heavy baskets, and the woman hastened up to him. The detectives crept round to bar his way, and though it was too dark to make out his face, it could be seen that he was tall and wore a roomy raincoat. After he had made his boat fast, the woman helped him to carry his baskets along the jetty towards the quay, with the intention apparently of making for the town. Suddenly they were confronted by the two detectives, with whom they collided, so that the baskets toppled over and their contents rolled along the ground. The detectives apologized profusely, picked up the fallen objects and put them in the baskets again, and while the man in the raincoat shouted abuses at them, they raised their hats and disappeared.

From our hiding place we saw two other detectives following the man and woman and we attached ourselves to the procession. It was dark and rain was falling, and we could only see the pursuers, not the pursued. Suddenly they ran round different corners and we came to a standstill, for the detectives had lost the trail. I was fed-up with chasing myself and had other things to do, so I went home. We knew where the man kept his boat, and it would not be difficult to discover what he was up to. In fact, we found out on the following day as much as we wanted to know. His business in the harbour was quite harmless. He

was especially interested in the sale of tobacco and spirits, and, as far as the sale of alcohol was concerned, he appeared to be his own best customer. He lived with a woman and seemed to be in fear of the law, for he frequently changed his quarters. He had got drunk one night in a tavern by the waterside and had declared in all seriousness that he was a German captain occupied in placing bombs on Allied munition transports so that they caught fire at sea. The whole affair was ridiculous, but it was a matter of great concern to us since all the British detectives swore positively that he was Captain Rintelen in disguise. The New York police had often ascertained that Rintelen was often seen in society in evening dress and that he lived at the New York Yacht Club. But this did not influence the detectives, who declared that Rintelen was leading a dual existence, in one phase of which he appeared as the decayed individual with the motor boat. They even succeeded in convincing the American secret police, or at least the minor officials, who soon believed this grotesque nonsense. The man they were after noticed of course that he was being pursued; but as he had a bad conscience he disappeared and thus strengthened the suspicions of the police.

We hit on an idea which caused us considerable amusement, but which, when we carried it out, served us well to the end. One of my men who was less in the bad books of the police than the others, and who could not under any circumstances have been charged with an act of sabotage, bribed the eccentric stranger to enter our service, and we discovered that, as a matter of fact, he bore a certain superficial resemblance to myself. He had gone to the dogs and was constantly drunk. Our subsequent activities not only completely nonplussed the British detectives, and even some of the American police officials, but made them all the more certain that we were one and the same individual. My agent picked him up in the street one day, stood him a number of drinks, put him in a car, and took him to the little dockside tavern in which he had previously engaged a room. The man was in a state of semi-intoxication and allowed himself to be stripped of his dingy garments and dressed in a new suit and patent-leather shoes which were much too large for him. He was then taken to a large, fashionable hotel and the detectives lost all trace of him. It was a game which my men went on playing with numerous variations, and it not only amused us, but fulfilled its purpose.

We then let him return to his business, which he soon began to neglect, however, as he received plenty of money from us. He

was in such a state that he never asked questions, but did blindly everything we asked of him. A few dollars in his pocket and frequent drinks kept him happy. He could not give us away, since he knew nothing about us, and we found him very useful. He began to take an interest in his clothes, and every morning he showed himself at a busy street crossing not far from the Yacht Club. In the other part of the town, where our office was situated, he disconcerted both the lift boys and the detectives.

When we had thus led the police on a false trail, I began to spin my threads again. Dr. Scheele was instructed to resume the construction of detonators, and in spite of the increased risks we succeeded in placing them on transports. As before, we only put them on British, French, and Russian vessels so as not to violate American neutrality. We also rented a new office, rooms being put at our disposal by a German of half-Mexican extraction and of an adventurous disposition. We equipped our new quarters so that the rooms were divided into two parts by special doors and were connected by telephone and an alarm bell which rang very softly. I was thus protected against undesirable visitors and possessed an emergency exit to the corridor to ensure an orderly retreat. We were now called the "Mexico North-Western Railway Company," and this name appeared neatly on the door of our office.

The first act of the new firm was to acquire an idea, the father of which was a young German engineer named Fay. He declared that he had invented a machine which was capable of tearing off a ship's rudder while at sea. He made a good impression on me, and after discussing the matter with my captains I gave Fay money to prepare his experiments. He returned a week later and said he was ready. I sent him into the country with a couple of the captains to buy a piece of ground in a deserted region which was well hidden by trees. Here they constructed the stern of a ship out of wood and attached to it a genuine rudder. To this rudder was fixed a detonator, the tip of which carried an iron pin which was needle-shaped at the lower end. The pin was connected with the rudder-shaft itself; and as the shaft revolved the iron pin turned with it, gradually boring its way into the detonator, until it eventually pierced the fulminate and caused an explosion which blew away the rudder.

When the model had been solidly constructed, Fay attached his apparatus and began to revolve the rudder. The captains stood at a respectful distance and Fay kept on turning for about an hour

or so. Then there was a terrific bang, and bits of the model flew about the captains' ears. Fay himself went up in the air, but came down again in the wood with only a few injured ribs. The trees themselves were damaged, and a fire broke out which they had to extinguish. They then got into the car and returned to New York to report to me that the invention had functioned efficiently.

Fay was financed with enough money to carry on his experiments, until he succeeded in producing his apparatus in a handy form and was ready to make his first attempt. He took a motor boat out into the harbour one evening and apparently had engine trouble, for he drew up alongside the rudder of one of the big munition transports and made fast. He actually managed in two cases to fix his machine, and we waited results. They were announced in due course by the *Shipping News*, and the New York papers were agitated. There had been two mysterious accidents, and nobody could say how they happened. Two transports had had their rudders torn away at sea and suffered serious damage to the stern. One of them had been abandoned by its crew and was drifting as a wreck on the Atlantic, while the other had had to be towed into the nearest harbour.

When this success had become public knowledge, Fay could no longer venture to sail about the harbour in his motor boat. He was young, but bold and resolute, and during the next few weeks he undertook adventures on munition transports which demanded iron nerves. He mounted his machine on a large platform made of cork, and swam out into the harbour under cover of darkness. When he reached the vessels that he had marked out, he fixed his apparatus to their rudders. A number of further successes were recorded, and numerous Allied shells failed to reach the guns for which they had been destined. With the help of Fay's new invention, which we used not only in New York, but in other ports, we were able to give our undertaking a new turn. What the incendiary bombs could not achieve was reserved for Fay's machines. The number of transports had, however, increased nearly tenfold since we first began our work, and as it was impossible to interfere with them all, we had to find a new inspiration.

Meanwhile I had another iron in the fire. I had studied the foreign political situation of the United States, and realized that the only country she had to fear was Mexico. If Mexico attacked her she would need all the munitions she could manufacture, and would be unable to export any to Europe. There was, however,

no prospect of this, since Mexico was torn by internal dissensions. Huerta, the former president, was in exile, though I knew that he still hoped to regain his lost position. He ascribed his fall to the United States, which he suspected of having fomented the revolution which had brought him to grief. While he was still in power, American capital had made further attempts to gain possession of Mexico's oil, but had met with resistance from Huerta, which was only broken down when the revolution sent him into banishment.

This was the situation when I decided to take a hand in the game. I learned that Huerta was in the United States and made every effort to find where he was staying. He suddenly turned up in New York, and I went to his hotel, the Manhattan, to see him. On my way I pondered how to approach him, but could not think of any plan, and decided to rely on my instinct. He was sitting alone in the lounge and was surprised to be addressed by a complete stranger. When I looked into his eyes I realized at once the best way to approach him. I told him I was a German officer, mentioned the munition transports, and offered him my help there and then. I expressed my readiness to do all I could to bring his party into power again in Mexico.

Though I gave my reasons for visiting him, he was afraid of a trap and thought I might be an American agent. He remained silent, and I made every effort to convince him that I really was a German officer, and not in the pay of the United States. At last he believed me and was prepared to speak frankly. He told me that another revolution was being engineered by his friends, but that they lacked weapons, or, in other words, money.

The interview lasted a long time. I was in a position to offer him effective help, and we discussed what was to be done if the new revolution should be crowned with success. This was a matter of the utmost importance to me, and we came to terms. Huerta stipulated that I should procure the sanction of the German Government to the following conditions:

German U-boats were to land weapons along the Mexican coast; abundant funds were to be provided for the purchase of armaments; and Germany should agree to furnish Mexico with moral support. In that eventuality Mexico would take up arms against the United States, and Huerta would have his revenge. This desire for revenge, incidentally, seemed to me to be Huerta's driving motive. After the interview I sent a cable report to Berlin.

As I left the hotel I caught sight of two familiar faces. They

were those of detectives who had frequently shadowed me in the past. I remained in the vicinity of the hotel until I saw Huerta come out, followed by two men, who were apparently guarding him. I went after them in order to make sure. Huerta entered a car, and the two detectives stopped a taxi and followed. There was no longer room for doubt that our interview had been observed. On the same day another disturbing incident occurred; for when I returned to my office, still somewhat agitated at my disconcerting discovery, I found Mr. Boniface sitting there with his legs crossed and very depressed. I was by no means pleasantly surprised when he told me that he had extremely disagreeable news.

"Cut it short, Mr. Boniface," I begged. "I have already had enough amusement for one day."

My eyes grew wide with astonishment, however, when he told me a story that I was at first disinclined to believe. He had found out, with the help of his shady but very valuable connections, that the "Most Secret Code" of the German Embassy had been stolen. British agents had got a girl to make up to a young and badly-paid secretary on the staff of the naval attaché. The two had become friendly, and she had persuaded him that it was absurd to exist on a wretched pittance, when he was in a position to earn a fortune with a single stroke. He had agreed to do what she asked of him, and had communicated the immensely important code to her, and therefore to the British. He was said to have made a copy and to have restored the original carefully to its place, which evidently was but poorly guarded.

This "leak" in the office of the attachés was naturally reported to me at once from another source. It had become known at Washington and was actually under discussion at a cabinet meeting.

I was very upset. It was the code that I had brought with me from the admiralty in Berlin for the use of the embassy, because it was suspected that the old code was in the hands of the enemy. I thanked Boniface for his information and sent him away. I then went immediately to the naval attaché, though it seemed to me unlikely that the code could have been accessible to a secretary, since there was a regulation which prohibited the trusting of a cipher to a lower official. When I was shown into the naval attaché, I said:

"Do you know that the 'Most Secret Code' has gone, sir?"

Captain Boy-Ed exploded:

"Who says so? Impossible! It is kept here under lock and key."

"*Always, Captain?*"

"Of course, I haven't the time to lock up every code myself. That is done by one of the secretaries."

"In Berlin no one under the rank of captain is allowed to put away a secret code."

"Excuse me. That is my own concern."

This interview convinced me that the code had really been stolen. I had a presentiment of misfortune, but I could not yet know what fateful consequences this was going to have for *me*. It was as well that I did not.

There ensued some weeks of waiting for the reply to my message to Berlin, and I was on tenterhooks to hear whether I could agree to Huerta's terms. I came into frequent contact with him during this time, and always found him in excellent humour at the turn his country's fortunes were about to take.

I was still waiting for the answer from Berlin which was to sanction my conspiracy with Huerta. It arrived eventually, and informed me that money was being held for the day when Mexican troops would be ready to commence hostilities against America, and that German submarines and auxiliary cruisers would appear on the Mexican coast to lend their support. It appeared to be a matter of ultimate indifference to Germany whether the United States maintained her secret enmity by supplying munitions to the Allies, or came openly into the war on their side.

On receiving the German Government's reply I drove to the Manhattan Hotel, but Huerta was not there. I learned from one of his friends that he was expected back in New York at any moment; so I waited. He had gone to the Mexican frontier to discuss matters with his party; but though I waited and waited, he did not return. I sent my agents out to search for him throughout America, but they could not discover a trace. Though I mobilized all my forces, the difficulty of finding one man in such a large country was enormous. Boniface came to me one day, and I told him that Huerta must be discovered at all costs. He thought that the American federal police must know his whereabouts, since they were probably shadowing him as an enemy of the States. Some days went by without news, and I was very worried, since I was anxious to see the ripening of the seeds I had sown. One evening, as I was returning from a social function, I was walking along in evening-dress to find a taxi, when a man passed me from behind with a swift step. I took no notice of him, but suddenly heard the words:



"You are being watched. Look out! Don't wait for Huerta. He has been poisoned."

I kept my control and followed the man with my eyes. I recognized the gait of Mr. Boniface. When I got into my taxi I was followed by a second car. Boniface was right. I was being watched. Later I heard that Huerta had been poisoned by his cook in a country house on the Mexican border, though no details of his death were ever made public. What actually became of him I never found out.

Though I was aware that the police were on my track I resolved to hold out. I had always been so careful that they could have no direct and clear proof that I had had a finger in so many "shady" transactions. When I entered my bank next morning, the official who always attended to my business—he was a German, knew my identity, and had often helped me—beckoned to me and gave me a letter. I read the address and grew pale. On the envelope were the words, "*Herrn Kapitanleutnant Rintelen, Hochwohlgeboren.*" The official whispered to me that the letter had arrived by post, and that there had been considerable excitement at the bank at the discovery that a German officer had a very large account through which enormous sums were being passed. Was the letter a trap? I decided to open it nevertheless, and saw it was from the military attaché of the embassy. I was furious at his thoughtlessness and stupidity in addressing me in such a fashion. Or was it done deliberately?

I had not time, however, to yield to gloomy forebodings, for I was in the thick of activities whose threads met in my hands. Responsibility lay heavy on my shoulders. In spite of Huerta's death I tried to get the Mexican affair going again, and I was still absorbed in my plans when, on the morning of July 6, 1915, an attendant came to me in the breakfast-room of the New York Yacht Club and gave me a message to ring up a certain number. The naval attaché was at the other end of the telephone, and he asked me to meet him at a particular street corner. When I arrived he handed me a telegram, which ran as follows:

"To the Naval Attaché at the Embassy. Captain Rintelen is to be informed unobtrusively that he is under instructions to return to Germany."

What was that? Had I not, but a few weeks ago, distinctly asked headquarters in Berlin *not* to cable my name at all, but to send me in writing, in a carefully considered way, their reply to my most recent suggestion?—the suggestion that we should now

proceed to buy up, in guarded fashion, the majority of shares in such American corporations as were, under their own charter, not supposed to engage in the manufacture of ammunition or accessories. That appeared, after all, quite a good scheme, one which might have thrown a wedge into the machinery of Yankee munitions and money-making.

Many years later—when I finally came home from this “Odyssey”—as late as 1921, *Anno Domini*, I learned that this suggestion had met with the approval of all and sundry in Berlin, even with that of the president of the Reichsbank, Dr. Havenstein, but was opposed by—Bethman Hollweg!

I could not understand why this telegram had been sent to me, and only knew that if I obeyed it immediately, I should leave things in a frightful confusion behind me.

At any rate I decided that “obedience,” in the loftier sense of the word, might still admit an appropriate interpretation of the recall-order, and I therefore wound up my business—unobtrusively, however, while I calmed my friends and helpmates with the assurance that within four weeks I should be “on the job” again, for I was convinced I could run the British blockade and pass to and fro at my convenience.

*Captain Von Rintelen was arrested by the British on the return voyage and interned in England.*

# THEY MADE HIM KING IN BORNEO

*By*  
OWEN RUTTER

**E**ARLY one morning in August, 1838, a trim schooner flying the white ensign began to nose her way cautiously up the Sarawak River. Standing beside her wheel was a man in the early thirties, gazing intently ahead. He was an inch or two under six feet, with a lithe figure, a handsome face and a sensitive, tender mouth. It was the mouth of a man who would suffer for the sufferings of others, but the slight curl of the lips at either corner suggested that he would have the courage to laugh in the face of misfortune, and the strength to fight with a high heart.

His widely-set grey eyes were bright with excitement. From time to time he sang a snatch from a song or uttered a queer little chirrup of satisfaction. He was happier than he had ever been in his life. He had reason to be, for he was doing what he had always longed to do.

Some men find their places in the world early, some late. Until the moment he sighted the coast of Borneo James Brooke had never found his. He was an adventurer, in the best sense of that often misused word. It was the spirit of adventure that made him run away from Norwich Grammar School. When he was sixteen he obtained a commission in the Bengal army. He was wounded in the first Burma War, invalided to England and finally resigned his commission without any great regret, for the restriction of a public service was too severe a curb on his freedom-loving spirit.

Then he bought a brig, loaded her with a mixed cargo, and sailed to the Far East, but the venture was not a financial success and showed him that he was not cut out for a trader. Yet after his travels life in England irked him. It was "like drinking milk and water after brandy," he said.

In 1837, the year of Queen Victoria's accession, his father died and left him £30,000. He determined to buy a vessel in which he could sail the uncharted waters of the eastern seas. He wanted to be his own master, to go where he liked, to plant his foot where white men had never been before, to see scenes on which educated eyes had never gazed, to study mankind in the most uncivilized quarters of the world. He had no personal ambition, no craving

for financial rewards. But even then the thought of suffering humanity moved him, and as well as his desire for exploration he longed to find some unknown land where he might be of service to his fellow-creatures.

He bought a schooner, the *Royalist*, of one hundred and forty-two tons burden, belonging to the Royal Yacht Squadron. "My darling schooner," he called her, "the pride of my foolish heart and the light of my eyes." After a cruise in the Mediterranean to try his ship and crew, he sailed for the Far East.

His first objective was the great island of Borneo which lies athwart the equator in the South China Sea. At that time it was almost wholly unexplored, but the northern and western coasts were under the sovereignty of a Malay sultan whose palace and capital were built on posts above the water of the Bruni River.

In Singapore he learnt that Rajah Muda Hassim, the sultan's representative in Sarawak, a province on the western coast, had lately befriended a shipwrecked British crew and displayed a humanity unusual in Malay princes. The Governor of Singapore promised Brooke a personal letter to Rajah Muda Hassim and the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce invited him to take with him a present in recognition of the services the Rajah Muda had rendered to British seamen. Brooke decided to make Kuching, Hassim's seat of government, his first port of call. That decision was to change the course of his whole life.

He took with him an Englishman as interpreter and, lest he should find Hassim's temper different from what he had been led to expect, he added eight stout Malays to his British crew. It took him over a month to make the passage which now takes four days, for he was forced to sail with the utmost caution; the charts often contained errors of a degree or more, and, as he put it afterwards, occasionally he had to clip some hundreds of miles of habitable land off the map.

And all the time he had to keep an eye open for the approach of a fleet of Illanum or Balanini pirates, who, in squadrons of two hundred sail, were accustomed to cruise in the Malayan seas. No trading ships were safe from these ruthless sea-rovers, no coastal villages immune from their attacks. They could shelter in a thousand lonely bays of the archipelago; a thousand rivers gave them hiding-places whence their swift war-boats could dash out to seize a peaceful merchantman or a Chinese junk; and, once sighted and marked down, scant chance had any vessel against those fierce warriors, who, arrayed in scarlet and coats of mail, came

sweeping across the sea, brandishing their two-headed swords and yelling their war-cries as they leapt on board in quest of slaves and plunder.

But although Brooke was to have many a fight with these pirates in later days, that first passage from Singapore was uneventful, and at last the *Royalist* anchored at the mouth of the Sarawak River. Brooke despatched a boat up-stream to Kuching to inform Hassim of his arrival, and Hassim replied by sending one of his nobles in a large *prahu* to bid the white men welcome to his capital.

No wonder, then, that Brooke was happy that morning as, her anchor weighed, the *Royalist* began to sail up the broad river. The oozy flats of twisting mangrove gave place to banks fringed with nodding *nipah*-palm. *Nipah* changed to grassy open country, broken by rice fields and groves of coco-nut trees, and straggling villages with gardens of bananas, sugar-cane and Indian corn. Far away in the distance rose and fell a long line of jungle hills.

"How much farther?" asked Brooke impatiently of the Malay pilot.

"One bend more," the man replied.

The schooner rounded the bend and entered a short and narrow reach, guarded by a small fort, beyond which lay Rajah Muda Hassim's capital. It was not an imposing sight: little more than a Malay village, with a row of Chinese shops and a large square shed, thatched with palm-leaves, which was the governor's audience-hall. But to James Brooke it was the threshold of adventure.

The *Royalist's* anchor was let go. She saluted Rajah Muda Hassim with twenty-one guns. The salute was returned with seventeen guns from the fort. Then Brooke landed with his officers to pay a ceremonial call upon the Rajah Muda.

A man usually recognizes the great moments of life when they come to him. Brooke was accustomed to say that as he marched towards the palm-leaf audience-hall in the blazing sunshine that morning he had a conviction that his meeting with the Malay prince was to have momentous results. He felt something more than the excitement of seeing a new country and of having the experience of meeting an Oriental potentate in his own land. It was as though a door at which he had been persistently knocking were suddenly being opened to him.

Rajah Muda Hassim received him in state, surrounded by his ministers and nobles. Chairs had been placed on either side of the throne. Brooke and his people sat on one side, the courtiers upon the other. Hassim's twelve younger brothers sat behind him.

A crowd of guards and attendants squatted round in respectful silence. Musicians played wild music from time to time. Slaves, kneeling before the visitors, served them with tea.

Hassim proved to be a small, plain little man, but he gave the impression of one accustomed to command. His manners were a pattern of courtesy and he received Brooke with kindly words of welcome.

Brooke produced the presents he had brought with him: bright silks from Surat, rolls of scarlet cloth, stamped velvet, gunpowder, sweetmeats, preserved ginger, jams, dates and syrups and a huge box of Chinese toys for Hassim's children.

Hassim received them gravely. Conversation did not extend far beyond polite inquiries after health and professions of friendship. Brooke, who detested formalities, longed to talk to Hassim as man to man. But he knew that would have been a serious breach of etiquette and schooled himself to patience.

Before he took his leave, however, he did succeed in veering the talk once to local politics. He had learnt that the real governor of the province was a Bruni noble named Makota. For centuries the Dyak inhabitants had been governed by these Bruni *pangerans*, who were accustomed to squeeze them dry, selling them into slavery for trifling debts, forcing them to barter their rice, beeswax and edible birds' nests at a fraction of their real value. If they refused, their women and children would be enslaved, or they themselves might be tied to a log and allowed to drift down the river out to sea. Makota's rule had been even more oppressive than usual. Finally the long-suffering Dyak had broken out in rebellion and the sultan had sent the Rajah Muda, his heir-apparent, to suppress it. He had not been successful, for Brooke knew that hostilities had been dragging on for four years. He ventured to ask Hassim if the war proceeded favourably.

"There is no war," replied Hassim negligently. "It is merely some child's-play among my subjects."

Hassim promised to pay a visit to the *Royalist* next day. In the morning Brooke again found himself faced with the elaborate etiquette of the Bruni court. Two nobles came off to inquire how many guns Brooke proposed to fire as a salute to their royal master. Satisfied on that point, they asked if Brooke would go ashore in his gig to fetch the Rajah Muda off.

Had Brooke cared to stand on ceremony he might well have refused this request. But to him it seemed less trouble to agree than to refuse. After all, Hassim was a royal prince and heir to

the throne of the oldest Malay kingdom in the archipelago. So he went ashore to meet him, and gave him a salute of twenty-one guns.

The procession which approached the gig while the *Royalist's* guns were booming was such as Brooke had never seen before. First came a standard-bearer, carrying the colours of Bruni; then a band of warriors armed with kris and spears, and men beating drums and gongs. The officers of state followed, one carrying the Rajah Muda's sword in a golden scabbard, another his war shield, a third his jewel-hilted and wavy-bladed kris. Behind them, under a yellow umbrella held by a slave, marched the Rajah Muda, dressed in royal yellow, with a turban of lilac cloth-of-gold. He was surrounded by his twelve brothers and his nobles, while a crowd of less important dignitaries brought up the rear.

Brooke conducted the party over the *Royalist*, which had been dressed for the occasion. They exclaimed with wonder at the long mirrors; they ate and drank in the crowded cabin; and some of the Rajah Muda's followers horrified the *Royalist's* officers by gobbing out upon the spotless deck the scarlet juice of the betel-nut they chewed.

Hassim was puzzled to know why Brooke had come to his country, and, on learning that he was not a trader, how he contrived to live. When Brooke explained that the English liked to travel, Hassim politely inquired if there were no parts of his own country still unexplored. But when Brooke mentioned that he had a fortune of his own, and so was free to go where he chose, Hassim was profoundly impressed and suggested that his visitor must be a relation of the Queen of England, of whom Brooke had told him. That remark showed Brooke the Malay mentality. A man must be a prince to have leisure and money to enjoy it, and the more money he had the nearer he must be to the throne.

Brooke obtained permission from Hassim to make an expedition into the interior, on the promise that he would not enter the rebellious area. Accompanied by two Bruni nobles he spent several weeks exploring rivers and forests unknown to Europeans and meeting Dyaks who had never seen a white face before. He learned much of Dyak customs and ways of life, and satisfied himself that although they had practised head-hunting from time immemorial they were by nature a simple and likeable people, their primitive condition making them an easy prey for their unscrupulous overlords, but as easily capable of having their condition improved.

On Brooke's return to Kuching, Hassim was as gracious as before, and presented him with an orang-utan, which Brooke called Betsy. He also promised to send letters to Singapore granting the merchants free permission to trade with Sarawak. As the *Royalist* was about to sail his last words were, "*Tuan Brooke, do not forget me!*"

As though to help this remembrance his guns continued firing until the *Royalist* was out of sight.

After leaving Sarawak Brooke spent several months cruising in the archipelago. Then he decided to return home. But Hassim's last words still rang in his ears. Moreover, he had been disappointed not to have seen that part of the country which had been in the hands of the rebels. By now peace might have been established and he would be able to visit it. He decided to return to Kuching before he finally sailed for Europe. Looking at this decision in the light of after events it is as though a magnet had been drawing him towards his destiny.

He reached Kuching again in August, 1840. The Rajah Muda received him cordially. The chiefs and people welcomed him. But he found that the rebellion, so far from being at an end, was raging violently. Armed tribes of Dyaks were encamped within thirty miles of the capital.

This time Hassim did not pretend to conceal his anxiety. There was no talk now of the war being child's-play. Brooke could see that he was scared, not only by the approach of the rebels, but by the intrigues among his own nobles, led by Makota. He appealed to Brooke to help him.

"You have a fine ship, *Tuan*," he said. "You have men and guns. Your aid will put fresh heart into my army and strike fear into the hearts of these rebels."

It was characteristic of Brooke that he could not refuse an appeal for help, above all when made by one who had shown him great kindness. Besides, here was adventure. He agreed to stay.

His first move was to visit Makota's fort up-stream, taking with him supplies of sugar, tea and biscuits for the army: a collection of Malays, Chinese and loyal Dyaks. On his arrival he made practical suggestions for an active campaign, and urged Makota to attack. He had still to learn Malay methods of prosecuting a war. They ate his stores but neglected his counsel. Makota did nothing. The Rajah Muda did nothing. The rebels remained where they were, inactive but a perpetual menace.

He waited for weeks, chafing at the delay. Finally, tired of



Makota's procrastination, he determined to leave Kuching, for his stores were running short.

Hassim received this news with consternation.

"How can you desert me now, *Tuan?*" he moaned. "Surrounded as I am with enemies?"

Brooke was touched. He had never seen a Malay so moved. Once again he found it impossible to say no. Moreover, he knew that there was no hope for the country until the rebellion was at an end and thought that he might prevent bloodshed and massacre if only Hassim could prevail quickly.

So he went up-river again. He urged Makota to attack the Dyaks' forts without delay, but insisted that the lives of the women and children must be spared. Makota listened politely, but all he did was to throw up more stockades. The rebels seemed to lack the initiative to advance. All the two armies did was to beat gongs and shout abuse at one another. Even when Brooke brought up some of the *Royalist's* guns and made a breach in the Dyaks' fort he could not rouse Makota to attack.

At last his patience gave out. He returned to Kuching, embarked his men and guns on the *Royalist* and once more prepared to sail.

Hassim entreated him to stay, more desperately than before. This time Brooke refused.

"*Tuan Brooke,*" pleaded Hassim, "if you will but stay and help me I will give you this province of Sarawak, its government, its revenues and its trade. The sultan shall make you ruler of it. All shall be yours if only you will not desert me."

An appeal to Brooke's compassion never failed, but he was too honest to take advantage of a frightened prince.

"Let us speak of that later," he answered. "I will stay on condition that your highness gives me authority to wage this war in my own way. If I am successful, and if your highness is of the same mind when the war is over, let us talk again."

Hassim agreed. Brooke took his men and guns back to the front. There he found Pangeran Bedrudin, one of Hassim's brothers, who had joined Makota. Bedrudin was a fine type of Malay prince, handsome, eager and brave, as anxious to end the war as Brooke was, and ready to lead the army in person.

Brooke thought that at last his difficulties were at an end. But even though he was armed with Hassim's authority, Makota began to raise fresh objections. It was not right, he declared, that Pangeran Bedrudin should expose himself in an attack. If he were killed

or wounded the Rajah Muda would be angry. The other nobles supported Makota. Bedrudin raged. Brooke argued in vain. But the nobles stuck to their point and without Bedrudin to lead them, the Malays and the loyal Dyaks would not attack.

Finally Brooke effected a compromise. Makota agreed to allow the Chinese to attack the fort, while the English served the guns. The attack might have succeeded had not the Chinese leader begun to say his prayers in a loud voice just as his men came within hearing distance of the enemy stockade. The alarm was given in the fort. The rebels began to fling spears and shoot their poisoned blowpipe darts. The Chinese bolted back to their camp and the attack broke down.

In the end it was Brooke and the loyal Dyaks who brought matters to a head. Makota decided to build a new fort to out-flank the rebels and command the river. Before it was completed the rebels launched an attack upon it. A Dyak came running to Brooke, begging for support.

Brooke seized his arms and, calling on his men to follow, set off towards the fort. As he emerged from the jungle to a ridge above the river he saw the rebels creeping up to the unfinished stockade. They were then within twenty-five yards of their objective. Brooke gave the order to charge across a rice-field. As soon as the rebels saw the English sailors advancing upon them they turned and bolted, flinging down their muskets, spears and blowpipes as they ran.

To make the most of the advantage gained, Brooke began a bombardment of the rebels' fort with the *Royalist's* guns. The rebels, dismayed by this soldierly activity, soon asked permission to treat for terms.

That was exactly what Brooke wanted, for although he confessed that he enjoyed the excitement of a fight he disliked destroying human life. So he agreed to a truce, but insisted that there must be no delay. He would meet the rebel chiefs that very night. It seemed a good opportunity to reach a settlement, for Makota had gone to Kuching. A meeting-place was appointed on the river bank between the rebels' fort and Makota's camp.

When the time came some of Makota's officers hung back, saying that they feared treachery. But Brooke insisted on keeping his promise to meet the rebels, and finally they set out. Even then the situation was nearly ruined by one of the Bruni captains suggesting that it would be wise to seize the rebel leader when he arrived.

Brooke overheard this proposal. He was furious. The thought that after all his work he should be betrayed by one of his own side was more than he could stand. He whipped out his pistol, pointed it at the Bruni, and vowed that he would shoot him if he dared to lay a finger on anyone who trusted to a flag of truce.

That was enough. No more was said. The rebel chief and his followers arrived and were not molested.

One can picture that scene: the clearing beside the pebbly river, lighted by torches, the gloom of the jungle behind. On one side the Dyaks, squatting on their hunkers, naked but for their bark loin-cloths and the black-and-white hornbill feathers in their hair. Facing them, Brooke and his white companions, the handsome Bedrudin at his side. Behind them the Bruni nobles, in tight-fitting coats of many colours and head-dresses of cloth-of-gold, watchful for treachery and still meditating it themselves.

Brooke wasted no time in talking. He proposed his terms: Unconditional surrender. The rebels must hand over their fort, burn their stockades and give up their arms. The Dyaks agreed, on condition that their lives should be spared.

"I have no power to give that promise," said Brooke. "The Rajah Muda is the ruler of this land and the power of life and death is his alone. But I will promise to use my influence with him to save your lives, and I will be responsible for them until his highness's orders arrive."

The rebels agreed to surrender on those terms. If one needs proof of Brooke's personal magnetism, his power of inspiring confidence, one has it there. Those Dyaks had never set eyes on a white man before. They had been accustomed to tyranny and misrule. Their Bruni overlords had cheated them and enslaved them for generations. They had never known what it was to have confidence in a man who was not of their own race. Had Makota or even Bedrudin, promised to intercede for them or to guarantee their safety, they would not have listened to him. Yet they trusted Brooke.

Once they had agreed to his terms Brooke gave orders that no boats should go up-stream from his camp without his permission. But the very next morning he saw a large canoe full of Bruni nobles paddling up the river. The chance of looting the unsuspecting Dyaks was too good to be missed. Brooke hailed the canoe three times. It went on. He fired a blank cartridge and then a wide ball to turn it back, but the Bruni nobles only ordered their men to paddle faster. It was not until they found they were being

fired on in earnest, and that shot was whistling past their heads. that they put the canoe about and returned.

Brooke then went to Kuching to plead for the rebels' lives. Although he had made them no fair promises, he was determined that they should not be put to death. But he found the Rajah Muda uncompromisingly firm. Hassim declared that the rebels had forfeited their lives by making war upon his government. They must die. It was custom, he insisted: and there is nothing dearer than custom to the Malay heart.

Brooke argued for hours. There is no doubt that by this time Hassim was genuinely attached to Brooke, and had good reason to be grateful to him. But in this one matter he appeared adamant.

Finally Brooke rose and said:

"If your highness will not grant me these people's lives after all I have done, I can but think that our friendship must be at an end."

Only then did Hassim give way. Far from wanting to see the last of Brooke now that peace was restored Hassim clung to him more than ever. He gave his solemn word that the lives of the rebels should be spared, but stipulated that for a time their wives and children should be held as hostages for their good behaviour and that their property must be given up. Having secured his main point, Brooke agreed.

Then Hassim honourably renewed his offer to make Brooke ruler of Sarawak. This time Brooke accepted, on condition that he should be left free to act as he thought best in the interests of the country and its people.

Hassim declared that it should be so. It was the wish of his heart, he said, to see things mended, and he promised to have a document prepared for the sultan's seal, since the cession would not be valid without his highness's consent.

The weeks went by however, and, to Brooke's surprise and indignation, Hassim did not carry out his promise. Brooke waited on, while Hassim remained in his palace for days on end.

At last Brooke discovered the reason. It became clear that Makota was the cause of the delay. After the rebellion Hassim had formally deposed Makota from the governorship of Sarawak, but Makota had not left Kuching and still had influence with the nobles of Hassim's court. He had always been jealous of Brooke; he was more energetic and had quicker wits than Hassim, and at the court of Bruni he had the support of Hassim's enemies. So that Hassim, in spite of his promise, hesitated to take the decisive step.

Makota was too clever to defy Brooke openly. Whenever the two met, he was mild and courteous. Then something happened that gave Brooke an excuse to act. He discovered a plot to poison some of his servants. It became clear that Makota's people were the guilty parties. Brooke went straight to Hassim, laid the case before him and demanded redress. Hassim tried to put him off with vague promises of inquiry.

But by now Brooke's patience was at an end. He left Hassim's audience-hall, went straight on board the *Royalist*, mustered his people, loaded his guns and brought the schooner's broadside to bear on the palace.

Then he went ashore with an armed detachment of sailors. He demanded an immediate audience with the Rajah Muda, and obtained it. He denounced Makota as a traitor. He declared that while Makota remained in Sarawak neither the Rajah Muda nor he himself were safe. He warned Hassim that he, not Makota, had the people behind him, and insisted that the only way to prevent fresh bloodshed was for Hassim to proclaim him ruler of Sarawak.

This outburst of righteous indignation brought Hassim to his senses. Like other weak-minded men he was glad to have his mind made up for him. His vacillation vanished. He gave Brooke permission to drive Makota from Kuching.

Makota, faced with so determined an adversary, found wisdom in flight. Once freed from his influence Hassim formally made over to Brooke the government of Sarawak, with its dependencies and revenues, and with power of life and death over its people, in return for an annual payment of £500 to the sultan of Bruni. Brooke on his part undertook not to infringe the customs or the religion of the people so long as they were not in conflict with the dictates of humanity.

These terms were embodied in a deed of cession which was prepared for the sultan's seal. Armed with this document Brooke hastened to Bruni, taking Bedrudin with him.

The sultan received him in his audience-hall, a three-walled building open on the side which faced the river. On the platform before the entrance were mounted six brass cannon. The sultan sat cross-legged on what Brooke recognized as a wooden Chinese bedstead which had been carved, painted and gilded to form a throne. He was dressed in a jacket of dark-green velvet, and loose trousers of heavily-embroidered purple satin. On his head was a light cloth turban, which did not conceal his baldness. A

golden-hilted kris protruded from the scarlet sarong he wore about his waist. His feet were bare, his body fat and bloated. On his right hand were two thumbs.

He was not an impressive figure and the way he peered into Brooke's face reminded him of a half-witted child. But his greeting was even warmer than Hassim's had been. He kept clasping Brooke's hand and calling him his friend. Rather to Brooke's astonishment he made no difficulties about handing over Sarawak, and on learning the amount of the cession money that was to be paid, he exclaimed:

"I wish you to be there. I don't want anyone else. You are my friend and it is no one's business but mine. The country is mine. If I choose to give you all, I can!"

He agreed to take the first year's cession money in kind and begged Brooke to send him British goods, especially sweets.

"And let the ship come before the fasting month begins," he begged, "or what shall I do without dates and soft sugar?"

The deed confirming Brooke as Rajah of Sarawak was signed and sealed, and he sailed back with it to Kuching. On his return he had an enthusiastic reception, for no one had expected him to come back alive.

On September 24, 1841, the deed of cession was received in state. Surrounded by men carrying torches it was brought from the schooner to a raised platform on which stood the minister who was to read the proclamation. Below him stood Hassim, a drawn sword in his hand. Near him were his brothers and Brooke. The remainder of the company was seated.

The deed of cession was read, and James Brooke was proclaimed Rajah of Sarawak. Then Hassim cried in a loud voice:

"If anyone present contests the sultan's appointment, let him now declare himself!"

There was silence.

"Is there any minister or noble who questions the sultan's will?" demanded Hassim.

Still silence.

Hassim challenged each of the nobles in turn. Each promised to obey.

Then Hassim waved his sword and declared:

"Whoever dares to disobey the sultan's mandate, I will split his skull!"

Such was the coronation of James Brooke, first white rajah of Sarawak. He became ruler of a territory the size of Yorkshire,

with a population of eight thousand Dyaks, fifteen hundred Malays and one thousand Chinese.

As time went by the sultan gave him a deed which acknowledged his absolute sovereignty of Sarawak, and Great Britain recognized Sarawak as an independent state and now protects it from aggression from without. Gradually the territory was enlarged by peaceful treaty and Brooke devoted his life to the ideal which became the single purpose of his life: the creation of a free people in an independent state. He settled the head-hunting feuds which had menaced life and property for generations; with the help of the British navy he stamped out the pirates who for centuries had roved the Malayan seas.

Those who have succeeded him have maintained his traditions. The present rajah, Sir Charles Vyner Brooke, the third of the dynasty and great-nephew of James Brooke, rules over a territory the size of England with a population of half a million souls, content to follow the selfless purpose of the Brookes, which has always been to administer the country for the benefit of its own people and not for the advantage of its white rulers.

# STORMS AND BANDITS IN THE GOBI DESERT

By  
Dr. SVEN HEDIN

*The exploration of the Gobi Desert in Mongolia is among the most recent and famous work of the Swedish geographer and explorer, Dr. Sven Hedin. The whole expedition extended over a period of five years, during which time Dr. Hedin and other members of his expedition, which included Swedes, Germans and Chinese made some marvellous discoveries. At this time China was in a state of great unrest. The expedition was in constant danger from bandits on the one hand and the authorities of the various districts were inclined to treat them with deep suspicion on the other, and to refuse them permission to proceed. This extract tells of an anxious time when Dr. Hedin himself was ill, the expedition was split up into small parties, and the Chinese authorities were definitely reported to be hostile to them.*

WHEN on the morning of December 7 we continued our march towards the north-west, two of the last sections of the great caravan were still camping. We had not yet come far, when we rode past a camel that had refused to follow us farther. It stood by the road on unsteady legs and looked at us with listless eyes.

The road leads down through a valley, and we again cross the mountain-chain that we have crossed a few days ago. The landscape is incomparable in its endless expanse.

From the black mountains in the south there juts out a great precipitous rocky spur to the north, which seems to obstruct our free passage to the west. Before we have reached it, however, we find ourselves quite near the edge of a strongly cut-out drainage-furrow coming from a valley in the south. There, where the furrow spreads in the opening of the valley, grow thick fields of reeds. Here the great Chinese caravan has now set up its tents, while our camp lies a short distance farther below. The place is called Shara-holussun, "the yellow reeds." A brook with a spring of fresh murmuring water flows along between broad ice-floes. In



the north there stretches now as ever the endless sea of the desert, and the landscape is one of the most imposing that we have seen since we left Paotow.

Major Heyder is a good shot and hunter. He comes to our rescue from day to day, by keeping us constantly supplied with fresh meat. Near Shara-holussun he killed two splendid buck gazelles. Two of our men succeeded in purchasing a small quantity of millet and sugar from the Chinese. In contradistinction to us, the Chinese have taken stores of provisions with them which suffice not only for themselves, but also for others. But they have, indeed, an experience which extends over a few thousands of years.

On December 8 the road ran first of all to the south and south-west. At a bend there rose up an isolated pyramid-shaped small mountain-top with a heap of stones at its foot. All at once the thick plant-growth came to an end and we rode through a peculiar valley, rising in a straight line, which was scarcely one hundred metres broad. Black towering mountains descended steeply on both sides to the flat bottom of the valley. The landscape was magnificent, but gloomy.

The valley then broadened out, and we travelled through a natural portal of two small eminences crowned with stone landmarks, and reached a very inhospitable camping place where there was neither water nor pasturage and fuel was scanty. The consumption of water for washing of any kind was therefore forbidden, and even the kitchen was asked to economize. The dogs had to be content with the washing-up water, but could hold out without harm on the snow which still lay in patches here and there.

Pains and restlessness disturbed my sleep. Not till towards morning did I fall asleep, and when I was awakened by Mento, who was making a fire in the stove at the accustomed time, Larson and the others had already set out, and only Heyder was still there to accompany myself and Mento. Since I believed that my indisposition was only temporary, I had not said a word about it to Dr. Hummel. My breakfast, however, remained untouched. Whilst my *yourt* was being taken down I sat outside at the fire while the sun was rising, and looked at the rose-coloured clouds on the eastern horizon.

Then we continued our journey on the *via dolorosa* of the camels. A terrible west wind chilled me to the bone, and I longed for Camp Seventy-two. Fortunately we had only fourteen kilometres to go to an open spring, whose ice-floes were surrounded by passable pasturage. At the fire, which was already burning

between the tents, Dr. Hummel gave me a first examination, and immediately fixed the diagnosis with unmistakable certainty: a new attack of gall-stones. He ordered me rest—in the first instance for today and tomorrow, and Hsü sided with him and implored me to keep to my bed until the attack was over. My protests were of no avail. I did not feel so bad as not to be able quite well to continue the journey. Under no circumstances did I want to hold up the march of the caravan, especially as our position was critical. Our camels were tired, and our provisions were running low. To remain a day in Camp Seventy-two did us no harm; water and pasturage were better than usual. I was therefore immediately put to bed and nursed and cared for like a little child.

During the rest-day a Mongolian caravan from An-hsi reached the spring. It was carrying barley and flour to Jasaktu-khan. Two days previously they had come across Norin's column, and they told us that the latter intended to camp today, December 10, near the spring of Sebistei, three days' journey to the south-west of here. Norin's camels had marched well and had appeared well and active. This news was comforting, for I had been rather anxious concerning the column, which was travelling through unknown regions. The Mongols themselves were thirteen days on the journey since leaving An-hsi and reckoned six days to reach home.

The great question now was: should we overtake Norin, Bergman and von Marschall, near Sebistei, or would only our roads cross near the spring?

For several days the whole staff had gone on foot, even the Chinese. Since the strength of our camels decreased more and more and almost daily a new martyr remained behind, we had to conserve their carrying power and even employ the riding-camels as pack-animals. The Mongols, who are not used to walking, still rode, and I was seated as usual in my "crow's-nest."

Dr. Hummel walked by my side when we set out at half-past eight on December 11. The air was still and the sky covered with clouds.

After a march of two hours he ordered a halt, lit a crackling fire, and put me to bed in furs on the soft sand. I had such gall-stone pains that he gave me an injection of morphia and caffeine, which acted as a relief. For a full two hours we remained lying at the fire, and then when we continued our journey in the tracks of the others, I did not exactly sit very firm on my high, swaying riding-animal. Never have I longed so much for camp. We covered 20.6 kilometres, and, as hitherto, I drew the route

of the march. At last we caught sight of the smoke of a camp-fire in the distance and finally landed among our party. My *yourt* was standing there ready, and I moved into my "field-hospital."

In the evening Dr. Hummel brought his sleeping-sack, his furs, and other things, into my *yourt*, in order to be able to attend to me, if it became necessary.

When the following day we moved along in the accustomed way behind our caravan, and were at a distance of only another two kilometres from our camp, which was No. Seventy-four, against the sun we caught sight of two forms that came hurrying to meet us. One was Larson; the other Norin. It was a great joy to us to see Norin safe and sound and to hear that Bergman and von Marschall were camping at the spring of Sebistei scarcely fifty *li* to the north-west.

In Camp Seventy-four, where there was no water and the pasturage was bad, Norin remained the night with us. It was now a question of in some way or other conveying my poor body to the spring of Sebistei, where everything—water, pasture, and fuel—was to hand, and where the doctor with inflexible firmness ordered two weeks' rest for his patient. Just as definitely did he forbid me to ride, since the rolling gait of the camel was obviously not beneficial to my disturbed gall-stones.

But how in the world was I to get to Sebistei, if I could not walk and was not allowed to ride? Naturally there wasn't any vehicle here, and one could not be made with the small store of wood we had with us.

Shortage of water forced us already next morning to continue our journey to the spring of Sebistei. Professor Hsü made the suggestion of making a sledge out of tent-poles and boards from boxes. That could be drawn either by camels or by men. But Larson explained that, owing to the stony ground, such a conveyance would come to an end after two kilometres. He himself was for a litter, which might be carried by four mounted Mongols on quiet camels. I protested, however, that I had no liking at all for mounting such a flying-machine, which ran the risk any minute of being either crushed between the four camels, or torn to pieces if the shying animals pulled in four different directions.

Then December 13 dawned, a day which in the chronicle of my life shall be marked with three stars. It is one of my most cherished memories, for it gave me one of the greatest and finest proofs of friendship and devotion that I have ever met. I believe too that my companions will remember December 13—one thing

is certain in any case, that they will never forget how terribly heavy I was and how strange it looked carrying a living man across the deathly silent Gobi Desert.

At half-past nine we started out. Outside there waited an iron bedstead. Along the two sides two tent-poles tied together were fastened. The bed consisted of the sleeping-sack and a few cushions. In cashmere boots, cat's skin fur, and cap, I lay upon it, and was covered over with the large sheep-skin. The litter with all its appliances weighed at least as much as I myself. A good forty kilos weighed on each of the shoulders that carried me. As soon as I was wrapped up like a mummy, the first bearers stepped into their places; on a given signal, Heyder and Hummel, Norin and von Massenbach, lifted the litter on their shoulders and started in motion. After eight minutes Matte Lama stepped into Heyder's place, while the other three men only changed shoulders. Then new bearers gave a hand: Lieberenz and his servant Charlie and also the Mongol Jangsun. The rate of marching and the weight made it necessary that there should be a change every seven minutes. We thus had two sets of bearers, which relieved each other, so that each bearer carried for seven minutes and for the next seven minutes went free. I had my watch in my hand and called a halt when the time was up. I also made observations in my notebook just as usual. The Mongolian bearers did not understand marching in step. On their shoulders the movements were in irregular jerks. I had a feeling of greater rest and security whenever the four Europeans stepped under the litter again.

After about an hour and a half a rest of half an hour was made and the litter was set down by the side of a glorious warming fire. I was probably the only one who needed it, for those who carried me were warm enough with their work. Whilst we halted Heyder rode on ahead on Norin's camel and took instructions to Larson to send immediately at least eight Mongols to meet us, to relieve our first two sets of bearers. They were to ride, so that they might be here as quickly as possible.

After the rest of the procession moved on through the wilderness, Lieberenz took films and photographs, and I confess I was quite curious about the plates, which could not be developed until we reached Hami.

At one o'clock we halted at a point where *saksauls* provided us with fuel, again lit a blazing fire, and had a sumptuous luncheon: roasted antelope's kidney and green peas, cakes and butter, tea and cream.

After we have thus refreshed and rested ourselves we continue our journey, and my litter swings over new stretches of the endless Gobi. Mento, Bonk, Matte Lama, and Jangsun are my bearers. Relieving now takes place every five minutes. It is half-past three and the sun is nearing the horizon. I have it straight in front of me. We enter a labyrinth of low dark hills. Here the ground is undulating, but that is more noticeable to the bearers than to me.

Another half hour goes by and in front of us there shows up a picturesque quickly-moving troop of riders as dark silhouettes against the setting sun. They are ten of our Mongols and Chinese, who have been sent from Sebistei to meet us. They are riding in a quick trot. We halt. They dismount, and four of them immediately step towards the litter and bear a hand with new strength. Their steps are short but quick, and the hills to the side of the road disappear at a quicker rate than hitherto. Their walking does not, however, keep an even step—it is as if one is rowing through a ground-swell.

Our procession had now assumed imposing proportions. Before me rode three Mongols, of whom first one then another covered up for me the red ball of the sun on the horizon. On both sides of the litter rode the Europeans on the camels of the Mongols, a guard of honour as it were, and behind me rode the first body of Mongols. Now we advanced more quickly. The sun went down and twilight came on.

It gets gradually darker. It is cold, and the cold penetrates through my furs. In front of us the light of a fire is to be seen. When we reach the first tent—it is Norin's, Bergman's and von Marshall's—I call a halt, although Larson has set up our camp two hundred metres farther on. But I can get no farther; I have had enough. The litter is set down in the opening of the tent, and Dr. Hummel finds shelter for me in the heated tent while my *yourt* is being set up.

It was glorious to come into a heated tent out of the increasing cold of evening. Here I now lay like a pasha and received the envoys of the neighbouring peoples. Hsu was the first. He sat a long while by my bed and was most concerned, as ever, in his anxiety and his friendly and wise counsel. Then Larson's tall form appeared in the opening of the tent; he gave me a report on the state of the caravan. Huang, Ting, and Liu came, in order to inquire after my health, and several of our servants, too, gave expression to their affection and sympathy.

But the evening advanced and my *yourt* was ready. Those who were living in the other camp went their way, and finally it became calm and still with us. Norin told me that first three, and then two more, doubtful-looking Mongols, all armed with Russian army rifles of 1886 pattern, had come to his camp and had talked with our camel attendants. They were camping at some distance from us and were in possession of about fifty splendid camels. How they had come by these one could imagine. Without doubt we had a small band of robbers for neighbours, and now they had cautiously approached in order to ascertain our strength and the prospects of a sudden attack.

Norin suggested that we should forestall them and make a sudden attack on their camp with all the men capable of bearing arms. I entirely agreed with him, and when I lay awake in the evening, I meditated on the plan of operations that we must then follow. Our military forces would take the band of robbers prisoners and hand the scoundrels over in ropes to the authorities in Hami; their fifty camels would enter the service of our tired caravan, in order later to be delivered up likewise to the authorities. After such a victorious campaign against the pest of the peaceful trade caravans, we should enter Hami in triumph and be received as heroes throughout the whole of Sin-kiang.

In the interests of safety we decided to keep watch by our tents during the night. At two o'clock I heard firm steps before my *yourt*. I knew that it was Bergman who was now on guard, and called him in to me. He came and made the stove up; with this Hummel woke up, and we talked until four o'clock and forged plans for the future.

In the morning it was reported that the band of robbers had gone away; they had probably found us too strong. So our proud scheme went up in smoke.

Camp Seventy-five, which we had reached in such strange circumstances, became the most momentous of our whole journey. Here at the spring of Sebistei we entered upon a new stage of our adventures, and here the history of our expedition began to get troubled and dramatic.

Well wrapped up in my sleeping-sack, I spent the whole of the following day in a series of important consultations. I had long talks with Professor Hsü, Norin, and Heyder, von Marschall and von Massenbach, Larson, Bergman, and Lieberenz, and, when it was necessary, Dr. Hummel drew up minutes.

Before I was taken ill, it had been our intention to leave Larson

and a number of Mongols behind at the spring of Sebistei with the heavy baggage, while the whole staff with the necessary baggage and provisions and the whole of the hundred and thirteen camels proceeded to Ta-shih-to. At the shops of the merchants there the camels were to be fed up with strengthening food and left behind in the charge of the rest of the Mongols. A caravan of hired camels was to go to Sebistei, in order to fetch the large baggage and Larson and his Mongols. I myself and the whole staff together with the Chinese servants, on either hired camels or the best of our own, would have continued our journey by Tash-bulak to Hami, which we should have reached by Christmas.

In consequence of my illness our plan was altered so that Dr. Hummel and I were also remaining behind at Sebistei. The doctor firmly persisted in his opposition to my continuing the journey on a camel, and ordered me complete rest in all circumstances. Meanwhile, it should be possible for our party that was riding on towards the west to get hold of a cart with a team of mules and horses, on which, without needing to be apprehensive of a relapse, I could journey to Hami. When Larson heard of the band of robbers near Sebistei, he considered the danger to the heavy baggage much too great, and proposed to take it to Ta-shih-to with our own animals. He wanted to march by night, so that the camels could pasture throughout the whole of the day. I approved his plan the more readily as I had always had a dislike of leaving valuable baggage behind—one indeed never knows for certain when one will be able to fetch it later.

Norin now made the proposal that he and Bergman should stay with me and Hummel, especially as they would then have an opportunity to make an extensive and thorough geological and topographical investigation of the neighbourhood of Sebistei, which was in many respects interesting. For that they required from one to two weeks. Moreover, they would both have more than enough of notes and the working-out of their results to deal with.

Concerning Mühlenweg we were alarmed and anxious. He had completely disappeared; it was as if he had been swallowed up by an abyss. On the last days' marches we had neither seen his track nor found letters from him. We asked ourselves if he had turned off on the more southerly and more direct road to Hami and had abandoned Ta-shih-to, which lies on the road to Barkul. When he had parted from us on Ikhen-gol, he had provisions for barely a week. But he had his rifle with him and could shoot antelopes. He scarcely ran a risk of starving, for in case of extreme necessity

he could kill the worst of his four camels. He was, moreover, a regular dare-devil; and a man who right in broad daylight and amid a thousand dangers had fled out of French captivity does not get lost on the road to Hami. The help which we had expected from him had not appeared, of course, and it was not impossible that our large caravan would pick him up on the way and bring help to the helper—instead of the reverse.

Late in the evening those who were leaving gathered in my *yourt* to say good-bye. I said a sincere good-bye to each one separately and expressed the hope that they would soon succeed in raising the relief that we needed—camels, cart, and provisions.

Hummel and I had scarcely fallen asleep, when at half-past three on December 15 there sounded the reveille so pregnant with fate. At a quarter-past five the caravan started out in pitch-dark night. An hour later von Marschall, Liu, Chin, and Ottehong started out on the march with Norin's seven best camels. Finally at seven o'clock Professor Hsü with Huang and the servant Wang followed them. Meanwhile, Norin had found in the careful examination of our provisions, that of certain things we had only insufficient stores. He therefore wrote to Larson, that it would be best if they hurried with all possible speed, since we had flour, rice, sugar, salt, and other things, only for ten days. This letter he sent with Professor Hsü.

The Christmas festival had passed away, the last week of the year went by, the new year, 1928, commenced, and still we were stuck fast here in the middle of the desert like ice-bound polar explorers, waiting for relief. The Swedish flag on the Flag Height sent its call for help, its SOS, towards the west across the sea of sand, but the longed-for help did not come. Throughout the whole day there was a wild storm, which went like ice through our airy dwellings; it was dark and gloomy, but we were in radiant spirits.

On January 3, it was reported to us by Wang, our cook, that flaked oats, sugar, salt, pepper, coffee, and green peas, were at an end, that the next day it was for the last time that we should be able to bake bread, and that we had only a few handfuls of rice left. But we still had pea-soup powder, cocoa, and tea, and our servants a quantity of millet. Water we had, and Bergman shot each day at least one gazelle.

Early next day Mento woke us with the words: "Two riders are coming from the west." We sprang up as if stung by tarantulas. "How far away are they?"—"Three *li*." On the Flag Height the



large telescope had already been set up. One could see that they were Mongols. They were riding quickly towards us on their camels. Now they were quite near, and we recognized Bonk and Sanje Gipche. They sat weather-tanned and secure on their riding-animals, were wrapped in baggy sheepskin furs, which were held together by body-straps, and had red fur-lined *bashliks* on their heads. In five nights they had rode here from Ta-shih-to, bringing for us with them fifty cattie of flour and several exciting letters from our party. Marschall informed me that he had heard that Hempel, Haslund, and Mühlenweg had reached Hami, and that Walz under military protection had been seen on the road to Urmchi. "The soldiers here look wild, but are friendly. Beware of believing that they are robbers. A happy new year!"

In another letter Hsü Ping-chang told of his and Heyder's journey to Ta-shih-to. Of this Heyder himself gave an arresting report:

On the first day he had shot six gazelles and seen a wild camel. On December 17 no water; a strong west wind. Two camels dead. The 18th: a fierce snow-storm. One camel was shot so that they might have meat. The 20th: the storm increases in strength. They remain still. The 21st: a raging snow-storm. Impossible to start out. The 22nd: two camels frozen to death. All the others exhausted. It was decided to leave Larson and two Mongols behind with the whole baggage, while the rest continued the march with the camels and the most indispensable things. The 23rd: started out with a hundred and two camels, of which two died on the way. No water, but snow. The 24th: a fierce snow-storm; only a march of three kilometres; no water. The 25th: a storm; two camels collapse. The Mongols receive flour for the last time; will then live simply on camel's flesh. The 26th: a fierce wind; one camel dead, another is shot for meat. The 27th: another camel collapses. The 28th: they reach four *yours*, the first since Etsingol, and buy flour, sugar, and five sheep. The 29th: they reach Ta-shih-to. A camel dies. They hope to reach Hami in seven days. The two Mongols are sent off to us.

Finally, Larson reports that he was situated one hundred and sixty *li* to the west of us, that a four days' snow-storm had broken the camels' power of resistance, and that he himself could make do with the store of flour that he had.

With this we had received the first news, although not of the outer world, yet of our own forward detachments, and we had learnt of one and another of the hard times which they had had to

encounter. Then when we returned to our accustomed occupations again, our longing for the relief was greater than ever.

When January 5 dawned, we four Swedes had been at the spring of Sebistei for twenty-four days. The hours went their accustomed course. But only until 7.20 p.m., for then a change took place which, at one stroke, transferred us from the realm of plans and dreams into the world of hard reality.

We were all four sitting at the "writing-table" in my *yourt*. Hummel and I were writing, Bergman was studying Asiatic archæology, and Norin was working on his latest chart. There was a crackling in the stove, otherwise all was quiet—except for the wind, which roared round the *yourt*. Then there was a knock at the door! Our servants never knocked, but simply entered. The dogs had not barked.

"It is Marschall," I cried, fully convinced.

"Yes, it's Marschall," he answered in pure Swedish, and added, "Have you anything to drink, lads?"

I doubt if ever in his life Marschall has been so affectionately tended and cared for as on this evening. We fairly dragged him into a corner and made him a bed between cushions and furs and poured him out a good drink. He was frozen stiff right to the marrow of his bones. Mento had to make the stove up, so that it glowed and shot out sparks. Meanwhile, in his accustomed calm and easy manner, Marschall answered the storm of questions that buzzed about his ears.

"Are you alone?"

"No, I have Ottehong and three Chinese with me, twenty-five hired and five of our own camels, a sedan-chair, and several letters from our party."

"Yes, but tell me how your own journey has gone off."

"Splendid. After a trying forced ride I reached the little village of Mu-ohr-go, where, among wild, turbulent soldiers, I felt something like Hildebrand in the camp of the Huns. I joked and drank with them, we became friends, and they helped me to hire camels, buy provisions, and procure the wood for your sedan-chair which we cut into shape in a twinkling. Then I hurried back here and have been seven days on the way and have had to remain still for three days on account of a snow-storm, and then froze terribly. The day before yesterday I spent the night with Larson and gave him a supply of mutton. Today the road seemed as if it would never come to an end. We covered kilometre after kilometre; sometimes I rode, sometimes I went on foot, in order to

keep my blood in circulation. I was about half an hour's journey in front of my caravan. At last I could see the glittering ice-floes by the spring of Sebestei and shortly afterwards the tents and the flag-mast. And now here I am."

We thanked Marschall for having carried out his difficult task in so excellent a manner. He had had, it is true, the student Liu with him as interpreter, but he would never have succeeded in his commission if he had not possessed his excellent humour and the ability to get on well with both Chinese and Mongols. Everybody liked him, and all competed against each other in helping him. As a sign of our gratitude we now elected him a Swedish fellow-citizen.

In conclusion, Marschall also told us, as a secondary matter of little importance, that certain difficulties had placed themselves in our way. He believed, however, that these could be overcome, as soon as I was in Hami. Wild rumours had been in circulation concerning us. We were, it was said, the vanguard of an invading army, which had evil designs against Sin-kiang. Troops had been called out and the caravan traffic towards the east had been stopped, in order to rob us of the possibility of buying provisions in the desert. Except for two hundred letters which had been sent to Hami, our whole European post had been sent to Peking, so that there it would be thoroughly examined and scrutinized. Already now it could clearly be seen that we were under very great suspicion, and that the fears were perhaps justified which prophesied for us that we should be compelled to go back again from Hami on the roads that we had come. Perhaps we should not be allowed to enter Sin-kiang at all, which was the true object of our great plans. Were all our hardships and sacrifices really to be in vain?

Now the hour of our deliverance had arrived. In a fierce north-west storm and with twelve degrees of frost, the baggage was packed, and the sedan-chair was fastened to its long poles, covered with a tilt, and padded soft with blankets. The new Chinese caravan men had set up a tent for themselves out of poles and covers, which resembled a Lapp hut; when the wind blew it down, they built a hut for themselves out of boxes, in which they kept a small fire burning. During the storm the gazelles were more careless than usual, and Bergman shot four—a welcome addition to our larder.

Oh, these eternal icy winter storms! On January 7, too, we still had to remain. With their bulky loads the camels cannot start out against the wind. The next day the storm had abated, and immediately after sunrise Norin was ready for marching with

his section. One of his strings, five camels, mutinied and threw off its loads. But the rest could be held in check, and a short time later Norin's caravan disappeared in the west. Then we others followed and resigned the spring of Sebistei to the great lonely desert. I had, of course, not quite recovered yet, and had to take care of myself. The two camels which carried me were tied one behind the other. The extreme ends of the poles of my sedan-chair were placed through the loops of strong ropes which were fixed crosswise between the humps of the camels. Mento mounted the front camel and the curious conveyance started in motion.

In the night the temperature fell to 26.7 degrees below zero, and on the morning of the 10th it was bitterly cold. The snow increased: it lay in the hollows from one to two feet deep. When it became evening, we at last caught sight of the light of a fire, and soon afterwards I was sitting in Norin's tent. The camp was bad, fuel was scanty; to get water we had to melt snow. Bergman's and Marschall's riding-camels had broken down on the way.

Fortunately, we had only eight kilometres to march the next day, for the wind was terrible and the cold biting. We were therefore glad when, on coming round a hill, we caught sight of Larson's fixed camp. Wrapped up in his great red Mongolian fur, my splendid caravan guide came to meet me. He cried out, as happy as a sandboy, "Welcome and best wishes for the New Year." He had made for himself out of boxes a hut with a forecourt, which protected the entrance against drifting snow. The interior of his dwelling had a floor space of 2.3 by 2.1 metres, the walls were hung with camel-covers, and the roof, which rested on saddle-poles, consisted of the same building material. Under a four-cornered flue the fire burnt in its iron *tolga*, and here the tea-kettles were boiling and antelope meat was sizzling in the frying-pan. Five Swedes, a German, and two Mongols, Serat and Matte Lama, took their positions round the fire-place, and we guests, hungry and frozen through as we were, all did justice to the breakfast.

On January 12 we again took leave of Larson and continued our journey towards the west, between black clean-swept hills, which towered up out of the white covering of snow. Slowly and monotonously my sedan-chair swung along over quartz rubble and snow which gave under foot, until a quite unusual picture suddenly rose up in the distance. There numerous camels were

pasturing, and there smoke rose up from a tent at the foot of a hill. Was this a merchant caravan, or were they some of our party? When we reached the place, Saran Gorel and three hired Chinese came hurrying up to my sedan-chair and saluted me. They had been sent with fifty camels to bring help to Larson, and were glad that they had met me and learnt that they had only another twenty-two kilometres to their goal.

Saran Gorel handed me a packet of letters. They were from members of my staff and were read out aloud in Norin's and Bergman's tent. Very bad news! We had fallen between the millstones of the internal politics of China. Would they grind us to pieces? Would everything be lost?

I had already sent Walz on ahead from Etsin-gol to Urumchi, to report our coming to Yang, the governor of the province, and to fetch our post and the money which, thanks to the accommodating spirit of the postal authorities in Peking, had been directed for us to the capital of Sin-kiang.

Under the date of November 25 Walz wrote from Hami that he and his servants with their eight camels had crossed the desert in night marches, often without a road and without water. A camel had died; a second they had had to leave behind in a village in the neighbourhood of Hami. When on November 11 he reached the frontier of Sin-kiang, he was encircled by twenty frontier-riders, who, in order to instil respect into him, loaded their rifles before his eyes. In spite of vigorous protests he was kept as a prisoner for six days. In the meantime a *noyen*, chieftain, arrived, accompanied by two mounted squadrons, four flags and four trumpeters.

At last Walz received permission to continue his journey to Hami, under military protection. They took a short cut along the foot of the mountain range, through ice and snow. For the camels the road was very difficult. During one dark night three of them together with a rider slipped down an incline, without, however, coming to any harm. When Walz reached Hami on November 21, he had covered seven hundred and thirty-three kilometres.

In Hami he was led into a house with a courtyard, at the door of which two officers and twenty men kept guard. The following day he received a visit from the brigadier-general, Liu Darin, who subjected him to an examination.

"I must get to Urumchi as quickly as possible, in order to carry out important commissions, and I am provided with passport and arms licence," Walz explained.

"You must wait here until I get instructions from Urumchi," replied the general.

Walz was disarmed and his whole baggage investigated. Everything was made off with and gone through for money and opium. A metal tin box, belonging to Lieberenz, which contained films, was broken open, as the key wasn't with it. Nothing was damaged, however. The young postmaster Chên, who speaks English, acted as interpreter. Then one day after another went by, and letters went to and fro between Walz and Liu Darin. The Bavarian major, who won't be played with, demanded that the general, who had detained him for twelve days against his will, should pay all expenses for him, his men, and his camels. If he did not receive a definite reply next day, declared Walz, he would himself telegraph to the governor in Urumchi. Finally, Liu Darin gave the major permission to proceed to the capital on November 27, but not on horseback, but in a cart, and accompanied by a mounted "bodyguard." So much for Walz's letter.

In a second report Muhlenweg, whom I had sent out to Ta-shih-to on November 25 from the camp of Ikhen-gol, described his adventures. Unfortunately, as a result of his hurried and adventurous journey, which he mostly had to undertake in the night-time, he had not been able to make a sketch-map of his road, and it is therefore not always easy to follow his tracks. Only a daredevil such as he could carry out such a march.

After eight days he had reached the spring of Sebistei, which I reached with the large caravan a week later. The three men then continued their journey by night, and on December 5 came across a solitary camel-rider, a lama, who came from Lhasa and during the last twenty-five days had only seen a single Mongol. He gave them information as well as he could about the neighbourhood. Then they had flour and antelope meat for one day more.

On December 6 they wandered towards the south and after a long search found a path which might run in the direction of Hami. When, however, they noticed on the following day that no flocks of cotton from the camel-packs had been caught on the thorn bushes, it became clear to them that this road did not come from Hami, for it is from there that the cotton caravans start out. The next day they found a caravan road with flocks of cotton, and knew that they were on the right track. At midnight they camped at a spring, at which Hempel, Haude, and Haslund, had also rested with their caravan, which was clearly to be seen from empty preserve-tins and thrown-away scraps of paper.

On December 9 they came past a ruin to the side of the road. Mühlenweg and Banche rode up to it, whilst Lo Chang went on with the pack-camels. They could see how he made straight for a second ruin, in which a troop of unknown men were stopping. Their horses were tethered in the neighbourhood. The strange men looked at each other and began to speak to Lo Chang. Mühlenweg immediately hurried up to them, holding his revolver ready, and Banche came pale and frightened behind. Lo Chang declared that the ten men armed with rifles were soldiers. Mühlenweg ordered his two men to go on and himself led the camels down into the valley. But then the leader of the troop rode after him and ordered him to stop, at the same time loading his rifle.

"Show me your passport," he said roughly.

"First show me your own," answered Mühlenweg.

"I don't need a passport. But here is my chief's visiting card."

"Well then, here is my passport and my arms licence."

"If you want to continue your journey to the west, you must hand over your arms to us. Otherwise you must go back on the road you have come."

Meanwhile the whole troop had mounted their horses and surrounded the pair.

"Our road goes to Sin-kiang and we have no intention of allowing ourselves to be held up," declared Mühlenweg.

"All right, but then first hand over your arms to us."

After this had taken place, they all travelled together towards the west and late in the evening set up the camp. To Mühlenweg's question, whether other Europeans had come through the neighbourhood, the leader replied: "Yes, first one man and then five. They are now all prisoners."

On the following day they continued their journey. Near the road some antelopes were grazing. Mühlenweg asked for his rifle. His request was also granted him, but the antelopes had made off in time. For some time they followed the road to Hami, but afterwards left it again and rode across country. Our party found their position uncomfortable. The soldiers were not wearing proper uniforms and gave rather the impression of robbers.

After a while they rode into a gorge-like valley and halted finally in darkness in front of a cave, in which, so they said, their chief dwelt and two fires were burning. Spring water and reeds were in the neighbourhood, but no chief was there. He had obviously gone on the An-hsi road to Hsing-hsing-hsia, they said,

and thither they must also take Mühlenweg. Since, however, the latter stubbornly refused to go anywhere other than to his destination of Hami, the men declared they would have the chief fetched by messenger, and until he arrived, Mühlenweg and his servants would be their prisoners. They received permission, however, to set up their tent before the entrance to the cave.

Mühlenweg went into the cave and was well received. Inside he noticed nothing other than riding-saddles and on that account doubted that the mysterious companions were robbers. Banche, full of fright, stuck to his opinion that they had fallen into the hands of a robber band, whilst Lo Chang was convinced that they were really soldiers. In the middle of the night, Mühlenweg was awakened by Banche, down on his knees, reciting lamaist prayers. When he asked him what the matter was, the Mongol answered that they were in the hands of robbers and would certainly have to give up their lives. The rider who had been sent out after the chief had returned alone after half an hour. In Banche's opinion the whole thing was only done to deceive them. The robbers only wanted to draw them deeper into the desert, in order then to be able to plunder and murder them unhindered.

The following day they really went on with their prisoners. Towards evening the troop rode on ahead, in order to light a fire and set up the camp. Only the leader, who likewise was riding on a camel, remained with the three prisoners. Mühlenweg felt a strong temptation within him to fall on the fellow, tear the rifle out of his hand, and fly. But then Lo Chang reported that a caravan was to be seen on the right.

"I want to know what sort of caravan that is," Mühlenweg explained to the Chinese leader; "it may be one of our own sections." The Chinese had no objection, but made in a quick trot towards the caravan. Lo Chang went on in the tracks of the troop of riders, but Mühlenweg and Banche remained still. It was already beginning to get dark.

"Now our hour has come," said Mühlenweg to his companion; "they are in fact robbers. We must escape tonight."

Banche was nervous: "We have nothing to eat."

"That makes no difference. Here we can escape. The night is dark. We must hurry to the north and then sharply to the west."

"We must sacrifice the camels," suggested Banche, who had allowed himself to be persuaded; "otherwise they will find the tracks, and in the mountains the camels will make bad progress."



"All right, we will leave the camels behind. If they are robbers, then they will steal the animals; if they are soldiers, we shall get them back"

Banche had a piece of fat, which was the entire provisions, and Mühlenweg took half of the travelling-chest, three hundred and fifty dollars, which he could conveniently carry. The other half remained in the saddle-bag of one of the camels and was lost for ever. Then, on foot, they left their pasturing camels and soon came into a mountain valley. Where the ground was composed of soft dust or sand, Banche trailed his fur behind him, in order to obliterate their tracks. He soon got tired, however, and suggested that they should walk on their toes, so that their footprints resembled those of the wild asses.

They marched half the night, then, tired as they were, rested, but did not risk lighting a fire, so as not to give their probable pursuers any indication of their whereabouts. What shall we do if they come, they thought. But no one came. They marched the whole of the next day up to four o'clock; then they were completely exhausted and had to take a rest. Now the fat came to an end and at a spring they found water covered with ice. After a new march they slept in the night from eleven to one o'clock, when the cold roused them. The following day they discovered good drinking-water but had nothing to eat. They lighted a small fire, and then the wild pursuit went on. On December 12 they wandered throughout the whole day and the whole night. When day dawned they could hear the roar of flowing water. A brook at last! On its bank they lighted a fire. Then they threw sand over the glowing cinders and so got a warm bed to sleep on. After two hours Banche woke his master, saying:

"Today we shall see heaven."

"What do you mean?"

"Yes, I can hear a cock crowing."

They immediately started out and came to a simple house, in which a Chinese lived. Here they ate their fill and drank tea, bought flour and meat and an ass, and in the afternoon went on with their journey on the great road to Hami.

After they had marched for an hour, they met two mounted soldiers of Mongolian race, who put a number of questions to them and then rode away again in a gallop. After ten minutes a whole troop of riders appeared, whose leader instituted a new minute examination. Mühlenweg was master of the Mongolian

language and answered all questions clearly and plainly. The two were now led to a courtyard with several *yourrs*, soldiers, and horses. The "commander-in-chief" of the troop lived in a mud house, on whose *kang* they sat down and conversed. He had heard that two foreign prisoners had escaped, and now knew that they were the two that had been arrested here. They would, however, get their camels back the following day, he assured Mühlenweg. But neither on December 14 nor 15 did the animals come. There had been rumours that a great caravan of Europeans was approaching, and that late in the autumn twelve hundred men in eighty tents had camped on Etsin-gol. Now he wanted to know if we belonged to Feng Yu-hsiang's army. The whole of the eastern part of Sin-kiang had been mobilized on our account.

On the 16th, Mühlenweg made the plain declaration: "If I haven't my camels back tomorrow and we are not given two horses, we shall go on foot to Hami." They got horses. In the village of I-kwai-shu they met Walz's Mongol Sarche, and on the 18th they continued their ride and reached Hami, where General Lui took them in charge, and conducted a new cross-examination. On the 22nd Lo Chang arrived with the two camels for which he was responsible. Mühlenweg immediately sent us help and on this occasion, too, showed what a splendid man he is.

From Haslund, who had been Hempel's and Haude's caravan guide, I received a letter dated Hami, December 18. In the village of Miao-go his column had been intercepted by Mongolian and Mohammedan soldiers, disarmed, and held prisoners for eleven days. On the march across the desert they had lost only three of their twenty-four camels, from which it is clear how well Haslund had carried out his commission. That in Hami they were anything other than welcome, was only too clear. "One can see that something is wrong there." His request to be allowed to hurry to meet my column in the east had been refused.

Dr. Haude gave a more detailed account of the march of the column across the Gobi Desert from October 31 to November 27, when they reached Miao-go and were forced to make a halt. They were strongly guarded—on December 3 they counted eight hundred riders, and this force was afterwards strengthened still more. On the following day the column received a communication from Governor Yang, saying he did not wish the expedition to come to Sin-kiang. "He had already previously telegraphed to Peking that he did not wish to see the expedition in his province."

Hempel, Haude and Haslund, who also had von Kaull,

Dettman, and the student Li in their column, therefore drafted a telegram in English to Governor Yang, which was despatched to Hami and handed in at the telegraph station there.

On December 6 the leader of the column, Major Hempel, received a favourable answer from Governor Yang, who allowed twenty-six members of the expedition, that is to say, the whole staff, to continue their journey to Sin-kiang, subject to the three conditions: disarmament, examination of the baggage, and the leaving behind of all servants and camels at the frontier.

On December 9 the section again set out on its march, and in three days reached Hami, where all arms were immediately handed over and the whole baggage was carefully examined. Not until towards the end of the month did the members of the column receive a part of the money that we had had transferred from Peking to Ürumchi, and on the 29th they at last set out thither in three carts.

In a letter of December 24 Haude further reported that it had been forbidden them to take photographs and draw maps and to set up a meteorological station in Hami.

But—all's well that ends well, and so I must further mention in conclusion a letter written by Professor Hsü from Ta-shih-to on December 31. It is calm and dignified and expresses the hope that all the difficulties that we encountered on the frontier will be solved.

*After much difficulty, all Dr. Hedin's party reached Hami, and managed to persuade the authorities that they were neither spies nor bandits themselves. Eventually, they were granted permission to continue their journey.—Ep.*

# THE CURSE OF ANCIENT EGYPT

*By*

MICHAEL GEELAN

**T**HERE is a magic and a glamour about boy kings and their stories that bring the human touch to regality and pomp and gilded circumstances. The flame of their youth lights the high and gloomy corners of State and the murky cob-webbed corners of history with a warm and abiding glow.

They are the little heroes of fairy stories that come too desperately true. The romance of them fascinates, the reality of them repels. Hearts ache for them because they are tossed, so frail and unsuspecting, into that whirlpool of intrigue that for ever eddies around the steps of a throne. They are as much the playthings of others as their own toys. They are cast and moulded like tin soldiers. They can never be as other children are.

About them lingers an aura of something that is forlorn and sad and tragic. Petted while they lived, they are to be pitied when the crown has tumbled from the head too young to bear an ancient burden.

But none will deny the romantic appeal of these innocents of the inevitable. And the greatest of all the boy kings of history is Tutankhamen, ancient Pharaoh of Egypt, who after sleeping peacefully for over three thousand years in the Valley of the Kings, west of Thebes, was disturbed in November, 1932, by those who raped his tomb in quest of that knowledge which scholarship seeks so ardently and snatches so ruthlessly.

It was undoubtedly the most wonderful discovery ever made in the annals of archæological history. It quickened the pulse of the cultured world. Even the man in the street, caring little for the buried history of ancient Egypt or the resting-places of its kings, was thrilled and dazzled by the stories that winged their way westward to tell of the breathless splendour, the sheer glory and wonder of that which had been revealed to man's eye for the first time for so many centuries.

Under the fierce glow of twentieth-century arc lamps, the tomb yielded secrets that were stunning even to seasoned excavators. They were the new wonders of the world. The floating cities that modern men had built to scale the oceans, the planes they had

fashioned to scale the skies, the boxes that produced music, the cables that ran beneath the sea, the mechanism that flashed voices and song from continent to continent were, for the time being, as nothing compared with the inanimate treasures that had lain with King Tutankhamen in his long sleep.

These things from out of the dead past seemed incomparable, so lovely, so delicate were they, creations fashioned with such patience, such scrupulous artistry and grace that the finest lines and weavings of this new and different age and civilization seemed crude and ugly.

But the mood of November, 1922, and a little while afterwards was transient. Tutankhamen's name, which had vibrated with almost ethereal lilt, was echoed with a coarser note. It became a street call and a music-hall joke.

Then the great "general public" forgot. But over in the Valley of the Kings the digging and the prying went on for several years more. With infinite care and patience they prised away every secret that the good earth had locked away in the boy king's tomb. Everything they found they handled with reverence, not because it belonged to ancient Egypt and to Tutankhamen but because it belonged to archæology and was of the stuff of which museums and stilted tomes can be filled. They opened the beautiful blue stone sarcophagus crusted with gold, so that the arc lights beat upon the mortal remains of the Pharaoh, and in time their work was done.

I am no Egyptologist. I merely tell in crude and painfully brief outline of the adventures of the boy king Tutankhamen in life and in death. The work of the excavators was an adventure, too, but how can it compare with that of this astounding child who was twice illustrious—three thousand years ago, and in our own time.

There is a legend of this land that the bones were once found of the little murdered princes in the tower. But it is only a legend, with little substance, a pale ghost of a story. Even if it were true, what comparison would it stand with this revelation in the Valley of the Kings? In the tower a few powdering bones. In the valley a king whose body is still tangible, whose rich funeral trappings still endure. By such a contrast is realization sharper.

The rights and wrongs of disturbing the slumbering boy king have been debated. For a long time to come it will be asked whether there was a price to pay for intruding on the hidden peace of the royal dead, a penalty grim, mysterious and baffling. The curse of Tutankhamen.

We have the word of Professor J. C. Mardrus, an eminent French Egyptologist, that inscribed at the entrance to the boy king's tomb was this dread warning :

*" O ye beings from above. O ye beings from below! Phantoms riding the breasts of men, ye of the crossroads and the great highways, wanderers beneath the shade of the night! And ye from the abysses of the west, on the fringes of the twilight, dwellers in the caverns of obscurity, who rouse terrors and shuddering; and ye walkers by night whom I will not name, friends of the moon; and ye, intangible inhabitants of the world of night, O people, O denizens of the tombs, all of ye approach and be my witnesses and my respondents! Let the hand raised against my form be withered! Let them be destroyed who attack my name, my foundation, my effigies, the images like unto me!"*

An ominous diatribe. There are those who declare that it was never written on the tomb at all, but the professor is entitled to his say. He says also, incidentally, that according to the precepts of the old Egyptian religion, a soul when it passed on to the Halls of the Dead left behind it a "double" to watch over the entombed body and guard it from desecration.

It can be said, and has been said, and will be said, that the curse of Tutankhamen is a myth. Perhaps. On the other hand there are those who believe that it was a very practical curse indeed, a curse that took the form of poisonous germs and gasses sealed in the tombs ready to ravage the invader. Possibly. The ancient Egyptians were adept at such subtle vengeance. They spent years of thought and labour on the resting-places of their kings. It may not have been beyond them to have laid such sinister and invisible traps. It could be done today, and Egypt had a "civilization" too.

What is very true is the fact that in the years following the violation of Tutankhamen's tomb, many of those who were connected directly or indirectly with the event died prematurely and mysteriously and tragically, as this story later will show.

But a little more first about the boy who emerged from the world of three thousand years ago into the light of the twentieth century.

Tutankhamen was the son-in-law of the Pharaoh Ikhnaton. His mother was a woman of the harem, and he owed his succession to the throne to the fact that he married Ikhnaton's third daughter, a union which took place when both of them were little more than twelve years of age. He was still only twelve when he ascended

the throne, pale and handsome and delicate-minded, the most beautiful boy of his day, as he was later in effigy the most imposing of all the Pharaohs.

But he was an impotent ruler. The six to nine years of his reign stamped him as a nonentity compared with the mighty Kings of Egypt who had gone before him. He was a puppet of the priests, who took care to see that even when he emerged from boyhood he was not given the opportunity of developing any great strength or significance of character. His resolute and visionary father-in-law had tampered with both religion and politics, and the priests and plotters sought by bending the boy king to their will to blot out the dead Pharaoh's revolutionary changes. Too young, too weak and powerless to resist, Tutankhamen let them have their way.

He was little more than eighteen when he died, childless and almost without loyal friend, satiated by the licence and luxury that were the royal distractions of the times, wearied by the fret of unceasing intrigue, cowed by threat and warning. Death was probably due to consumption. The examination of his mummy revealed no signs of foul play.

For seventy days the beautiful young body of the departed Pharaoh lay in a great vat of liquid natron. And then it was prepared for its eternal sleep in the Valley of the Kings, a sun-scorched wilderness of rock near the ageless Nile.

Awesome and desolate, a place of scathing heat, the valley was selected by the Egyptian kings as their burial place after the abandonment of the pyramids which one by one had been violated by robbers with such uncanny powers and dogged patience that they were as "invisible men" to even a vigilant guard, and could dig and smash and burrow their way through the strongest man-made funeral edifice.

In their tombs in the face of the eternal Nile cliff the Pharaohs believed that they would rest peacefully for ever. Their faith was in vain. Of half a hundred tombs not one of them remained unviolated. To this place of eerie silences and sudden echoes came the native plunderers on their errand of sacrilege. True, they did not here enjoy the same measure of success, but the fastness of the armoured rock did not defeat them.

The tomb of Tutankhamen, in its turn, was attacked. Within a few years of his death and burial, the tomb robbers worked on it in the dead of night, lusting feverishly after the priceless treasures which lay within, caring little if anything for the dreadful curses

which they knew lay upon the heads of those who disturbed the resting Pharaohs. They were caught in the act. For the most part the booty which they had removed was returned to the tomb, though history records—or, rather, infers—that certain avaricious high officials of the period did not fail to avail themselves of this golden opportunity of securing at least some precious “souvenirs.”

Never again in ancient times was Tutankhamen's tomb desecrated. Indeed, some two hundred years later, when the tomb of Rameses VI was being excavated by its builders, that of the boy king was buried under a deluge of rock. Thus sealed, safe and secret from the outer world, a little kingdom of its own with immaculate peace within and no enemy at its door, the tomb remained inviolate for thousands of years.

But time marched towards it, greedy and relentless, curious to probe and fathom the wonders and mysteries of one of its own forgotten ages. The dream of the sleeping Pharaoh was clouded by the shadow of strange visitations. Into the picture now comes George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Herbert, the fifth Earl of Carnarvon, and Howard Carter, whose adventures in Egypt in the twentieth century have, in turn, made history. Lord Carnarvon was born in Berkshire in 1866, was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. Carter was a Norfolk man, born in 1873. For many years he was engaged in excavation work with the Egyptian Exploration Fund. Some time afterwards he became Inspector-General of the Antiquities Department of the Egyptian Government and was the discoverer of the tomb of Ling Mentuhetep.

In 1906 Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Carter began excavating together near Thebes and made many impressive discoveries in the Valley of the Kings. Fresh concessions having been obtained, they resumed their operations, and these led to the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen that staggered and dazzled the world.

They had many disappointments, these two, but they had patience, faith and optimism, and were indefatigable workers, Carter particularly. They left nothing to chance. While previous excavators had relied upon sinking pits here and there at likely spots, Carnarvon and Carter's plan was to select a generous area and sift it slowly and systematically down to the bare rock. They believed that a few feet might make all the difference. And it has been recorded that in the course of their efforts they shifted over two hundred thousand tons of rock and rubble.

One dramatic morning in November, 1922, Howard was working at a spot which he refused to neglect, but of which he had



not any great hopes since it lay in front of the tomb of Rameses VI, one of the show places of the Valley of the Kings, brilliantly illuminated by electric lights. Howard Carter was personally in charge of operations at the time, Lord Carnarvon being in England.

Suddenly the eyes which had grown patient through many years of disappointment blazed with excitement. Carter's body shook with an ecstasy of anticipation. Carved in the rock at his feet was a step! Below it another, and another. To Carter it was the staircase of destiny, leading to the realization of his dreams. Probably in all the remaining days of his life he would never know another moment of such rapture as this. At the foot of the steps feverish scooping revealed a wall, and on that wall was set the royal seal of Pharaoh Tutankhamen. To the passionate Egyptologist that Carter was this was enough to prove that he was on the eve of one of the most momentous adventures and discoveries in history. Flashed to England was a message to Lord Carnarvon to come at once to share in the glory of the revelation.

When the exploration was resumed a passage was found beyond the wall, and still farther on a sealed door. Lord Carnarvon has himself given in his own words a vivid impression of the next spell-binding episodes:

"I asked Mr. Carter to take out a few stones and have a look in. After a few minutes this was done. He pushed his head partly into the aperture. With the help of a candle he could dimly discern what was inside. A long silence followed, till I said, I fear in somewhat trembling tones, 'Well, what is it?' 'There are some wonderful objects here,' was the reply. Having given up my place to my daughter, I myself went into the hole, and I could with difficulty control my excitement.

"At first sight, with the inadequate light, all that one could see was what appeared to be gold bars. On getting a little more accustomed to the light it became apparent that there were colossal gilt couches with extraordinary heads, boxes here, and boxes there. We enlarged the hole, and Mr. Carter managed to scramble in—the chamber is sunk two feet below the bottom of the passage—and then, as he moved around with a candle, we knew that we had found something absolutely unique and unprecedented. Even with the poor light of the candle one could see a marvellous collection of furniture and other articles in the chamber.

"After slightly enlarging the hole we went in, and this time we realized in a fuller degree the extent of the discovery, for we had

managed to tap the electric light from the tomb above, which gave us far better illumination for our examination."

Both Carnarvon and Howard and all connected officially with the discovery realized that the work of salvaging the treasure would be a task of years' duration as well as one of love. Carter himself subsequently laboured on for eight seasons, from April to October each year, with infinite skill and caution.

Lights of three thousand candle power blazed down upon the legacy of the ages in those dark caverns of the rocks, and each lovely object was wrapped literally in cotton-wool, each minute fragment examined and preserved. Today almost all the treasure lies in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo, where it occupies several galleries in the crowded show house founded by Mariette Pasha.

In the two ante-chambers beyond the rock-hewn corridor were found incomparable vindication of Keats's immortal plea that "beauty is truth, truth beauty." For here were beauties of such worth and artistry, so truthfully mirroring another age, that they brought an ache to the heart. They reincarnated the days of wonder and enchantment when the boy king reigned in ancient Egypt.

Here was Tutankhamen's royal throne, a noble seat of delicate woodwork plated with solid gold, with lions' heads rearing in splendid posture. On its glazed sides gleamed the crown of Egypt in silver. On the back there was a panel depicting in vivid colouring the young king seated in all his glory and authority, offering a slender, jewelled hand to his girl queen, herself a vision of slim loveliness in shimmering silver. By her side was a bowl of flowers, the petals fashioned in precious stones. The seat of the throne was patterned in blue and white and gold mosaic squares.

They found, too, the robes of this boy and girl of destiny whose memory tore so dramatic and so real a gap through the veil of time—the kingly vestments of Tutankhamen, the filmy garments that dropped from the limbs of the little fragile queen at bedtime. They found the very candlesticks that lighted their love-making in the secret hours of palace nights.

There were statues of the king fashioned in bituminized wood inlaid with gold; the lion, hathor and typhon couches, proud in their ugliness; a delicate coat of mail threaded with gold and backed with fine linen; carved alabaster vases of surpassing lines and tints; magnificent sandals ornamented with golden ducks' heads; fabrics and tapestries and carvings fashioned by magic fingers.

And they found a child's white linen glove, a touching riddle

among all this resplendent finery. It is believed that Tutankhamen and his queen were childless. Who can guess why the glove was there?

One ante-room alone was packed to a height of five feet with superb articles of furniture in indescribable confusion, each one a little chapter in history, each one a human story. There is no room in this place to touch upon anything but a fraction of their significance, appeal and glory.

Thousands of visitors flocked to the Valley of the Kings. As I have indicated earlier, the newspapers in every part of the world were black with headlines about the greatest archæological discovery of modern times. Scholars were numbed by the sheer gift to knowledge. The public were hypnotized by the glitter, the romance, the adventure of it all. Business men clamoured to use the three thousand three hundred years' old designs for gloves and sandals, jewels and fabrics. Tutankhamen had been a poor and insignificant king of Egypt, but now he was undisputed monarch of world interest.

It was not until February of the following year, 1923, that the crowning thrill was experienced, when the sacred inner chamber containing the boy king's mummy was penetrated. Strangely enough, there was a royal greeting for the sleeping sovereign from the western invaders of his Valhalla. The Queen of the Belgians was among those who were the first to see what lay beyond the wall that resembled a sheet of solid gold.

There are moments that are matchless. There are moments that paint the mind with colours of remembrance that never fade. Such a moment was this, in the same deathless Egypt, three thousand years afterwards. As the gap in that golden wall grew, the vision that grew with it, ever increasing in tension and emotion, was the more breath-taking, spell-binding and incomparable.

Guarding the shrine of the boy king were four goddesses, their arms spread in angelic-like protection. The realism of their immobile glance, the challenge in their painted eyes was such that some who were there that day confessed afterwards that they had felt a stab of remorse, a sting of rebuke as they stood in the Pharaoh's secret place. Near by, more sternly vigilant, was the figure of a god fashioned in ebony and gold.

Within the sandstone sarcophagus with its massive granite lid were three successive coffins, each bearing an image of the king. The innermost with its dominating gleam of gold, was engraved both inside and out, and decorated with vivid enamel of light

blue turquoise, deep blue lazuli and ruddy cornelian. Can you place a price upon such things? I wonder. They say the gold alone was valued at fifty thousand pounds.

The Pharaoh's head and shoulders were covered with a mask of beaten gold inlaid with rare stones and glazes and exquisitely modelled with a portrait of the king.

The chamber was crowded with a rich array of articles that Tutankhamen took with him on his eternal journey. There were jewelled oars for his galley in the waters of the underworld, and, because he was a boy still, model boats to sail in Elysian streams. There was gold and silver everywhere, delicately carved ivory, alabaster vessels, precious stones, coffers and boxes, amulets, scarabs, ostrich feathers. Everywhere glitter, grandeur, beauty and purity of line, supremacy of craftsmanship, loveliness of thought, kingliness and a lingering touch of godliness.

Such was the peak of that adventure in the Valley of the Kings. A Pharaoh had stirred in his sleep.

And the curse of Tutankhamen? Each may believe what he will. There is a tragic sequel that may be coincidence. Whatever it is, it is odd, and it is true.

Within a year Lord Carnarvon, who had inspired the quest, had died from an insect bite. His friend, George J. Gould, the American multi-millionaire, who sailed up the Nile to visit the tomb, perished after a mysterious illness. Arthur E. Weigall, a distinguished archæologist, who was present at its opening, also died mysteriously at the age of fifty-two.

Two well-known X-ray experts promised to probe the age and cause of death of the boy king. They never lived to perform their examinations. Professor Theodore La Fleur, of McGill University, and Professor Georges Benedite, of the Egyptian section of the Paris Louvre, both died after visiting the Pharaoh's resting-place. They were followed into the grave by Professor Casanova, another Egyptologist of the College of France. General Sir Lee Stack, British Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army, who had been privileged to handle articles in the tomb, was assassinated. Dr. Jonathan W. S. Carver, who was at the opening, was killed in a street crash.

In Europe and America others connected with the opening of the tomb have died prematurely or of mysterious diseases. Several have committed suicide. They have gone to graves where they rest in peace if not in splendour. For them the tranquil undisturbed sleep they would not grant the boy Pharaoh.

# JOURNEY ACROSS "THE EMPTY QUARTER"

*By*

JOHN NORFOLK

ON March 11, 1932, two lines in a London evening paper announced laconically that Mr. H. St. John Philby, "great traveller and finance minister to Ibn Sa'ud, the Arab potentate," had been missing since January 2.

Eight days later there appeared in the same paper two small headlines: "Mr. Philby seen. Arab tells of yellow-bearded traveller." To many thousands returning to their homes in bus and tube and train this news meant nothing. Few of them bothered to read further. Those who did were informed, in a brief message flashed from Basra, that "A Bedouin Arab has brought news at last of Mr. H. St. John Philby, the British explorer and authority on Arabia, who set out six weeks ago to cross the great Arabian desert." There followed twenty lines of such scanty details as a newspaper correspondent in the extreme north-east corner of a country covering a million square miles had been able to gather, and there the matter ended. Those who had bothered to read at all about Mr. St. John Philby merely shrugged their shoulders and turned to the football news.

Yet that prosaic paragraph actually carried the first news to the outside world of one of the most magnificent adventures of modern times.

On Monday morning at the beginning of that very same week in March, 1932, Harry St. John Bridger Philby, son of a Ceylon tea planter, and former head boy and captain of Westminster School, had ridden into civilization at the end of a ninety days' journey during which he had crossed the very heart of the dreaded Rub' al Khali desert—known in Arabia as the Empty Quarter—where life and even vegetation has almost ceased to exist and where man has never trodden for probably seven thousand years.

St. John Philby had never been either lost or missing. He had been out of sight or reach of man for two whole months, but he had carried out, according to plan, an ambition that had burned within him incessantly for fifteen years.

He had tried and failed, and tried again. He had pushed on when even his Arab guides—men picked specially by his friend, King Ibn Sa'ud—had said it was impossible to get through. He had sought out and laid bare legends of the desert that had passed from lip to lip for years, and in the doing of it has himself become a legend so that in Arabia the men of the desert speak his name with respect and admiration.

The burning insistence of his ambition, the years of careful study and constant planning, and his extraordinary knowledge of Arabia and the Arab carried him through to the end of an amazing journey that none had believed possible.

Philby had set his heart upon exploring this vast desert country in Southern Arabia—and particularly the great stretch of "dead" wilderness where even the desert animals died of thirst and starvation, and carrion could not penetrate to pick their bones.

He gave up everything for it, the security of his career, his home, his religion—for he became a disciple of Islam and observed the tenets of his new faith more rigidly than many of the Arabs themselves. He learned the language of the Arabs and even their many dialects until he could speak them as perfectly as any native.

For years he lived in Arabia, made his home in Jidda, carried on business as a trader there using the name Hajji Abdullah. But Arabia had won Philby's heart long before this. As far back as 1918 an Arab who saw him passing through Taif declared it was impossible to distinguish him from the thirty-five or so Bedouin who accompanied him, so perfect was his command of Arabic, his mastery of the Arab customs and his general bearing. There was only one difference, this man had noted, and that was that Philby's feet were a little cleaner than the rest!

Actually, his flashing blue eyes were another feature that betrayed him, but that was all. Somewhat short of stature, but sturdily built and with a thick black beard, Philby was just an Arab among Arabs, except for those clear, blue eyes.

And during the war many a spy had cause to remember those piercing steel-blue eyes of his. It was the war that really brought him to this strange mysterious country that he loves so passionately.

He had a brilliant career at Cambridge and in the Indian Civil Service, and when the war broke out he was secretary to the Governor of Bengal at Calcutta. The war gave him his great chance. He began a series of mysterious disappearances, the full story of which only Philby himself can tell. Apart from Arabic

and its many dialects, this brilliant little man had mastered Persian, Urdu, Baluchi, Pushtu and Punjabi.

Already, in India, he had begun unconsciously to build around himself an air of mystery, for he developed a habit of mixing whenever he could with the Indians, moving freely in the bazaars, keeping his own counsel, noting customs and characteristics, observing even the smallest details of their speech and habits.

It was almost inevitable, when war broke out, that he should lose himself in the bazaars and Indian haunts, a figure of mystery, unobtrusive and uncommunicative himself, but observing everything with uncanny accuracy and quite extraordinary powers of concentration.

An insignificant, uncommunicative Arab beggar with downcast eyes, wandering and whining through the byways of Bagdad and Teheran was scarcely given a second glance. Had you been able to follow his movements they would have amazed you, for he turned up here, there and everywhere in the vast territory that lies between these two cities—and again, only he himself can give a full account of his mysterious comings and goings.

Enough, perhaps, to recall that in the heart of that country at that time was General Townshend and his little command making his famous stand against the Turks at Kut.

Philby's habit of disappearing, apparently from human ken, grew upon him at that time. It was only natural. He had already won a reputation for himself before the war and his knowledge of the people of these eastern countries was unique. Even as an officer with the Mesopotamian forces in charge of the financial side of the Intelligence Department he would suddenly vanish on some strange errand that required secrecy, resource, and a nerve of steel.

There were incidents in those days each one of which was a romance in itself, for Philby, when he had a job of work to do, went about it in his own way. He had that same abhorrence of red tape that was so strongly characteristic of the famous Lawrence of Arabia. He adapted his methods to the forces ranged against him, and only those who know the east and its mystery and glamour and its whispering tongues can fully realize the dangers to which St. John Philby was exposed on these long, lone excursions into the tortuous dark ways of Persia and Arabia.

Certain it was that enemies of Britain and the Allies who caused concern and trouble—and danger—in that far-flung theatre of war that lay between Europe and India ceased their activities suddenly and completely in strange coincidence with Philby's excursions

into those seething bazaar quarters where treachery and avarice made every man a potential enemy and one false move meant death.

This, then, was the apprenticeship that led Philby inexorably to the great adventure of 1932. His knowledge of this troublous country brought him to Whitehall, Lord Curzon and the War Cabinet. He talked of one Ibn Sa'ud as the one man destined to lead a united Arabia. He broke through the red tape of Whitehall to tell them what he knew and Whitehall told him he was mad.

But Philby smiled—and told them they could find him in his hotel when they wanted him. He had not long to wait. The wires of Whitehall began to crackle and hum, and away in Arabia, Ibn Sa'ud, fanatical Arab chief, was sweeping through the country like a naked flame. The red tape was down at last. Philby was sent for, and this time he walked straight into the inner sanctions of the Foreign Office. Lord Curzon saw him there, and in an hour or two Philby had packed his bags and disappeared.

Philby in London waiting for the slow machinery of Whitehall to take him to the audience of ministers to whom his news was vital was a different matter from Philby in Arabia seeking the audience of Ibn Sa'ud. He was no longer a stranger in his own land. Here, in Arabia, he was on the ground he knew, among the people he had learned to know better than they knew themselves—and he had behind him this time the direct authority of His Britannic Majesty's Government.

He came, as he intended to come, to parley with a great leader. He had long since recognized in this Arab chief a man of character and vision and, more than that, a man of principle. He had come to London to tell the government that one day Ibn Sa'ud would march into Mecca. He went back to Arabia to offer this potential source of trouble an annual subsidy of sixty thousand pounds "to keep the peace." That day was one of the most important in Philby's life. It marked the real beginning of a friendship that has never ceased since, and without which the great journey across the Rub' al Khali would most probably have failed.

It strengthened in Philby's mind the high opinion he had already formed of Ibn Sa'ud's abilities as a leader. It paved the way for their next official meeting which resulted in Philby's resignation to become Hajji Abdullah, the Arab trader.

Honours came his way. His own exceptional gifts were recognized. He became adviser to the Ministry of the Interior



of Mesopotamia in 1921, and the next year he was appointed Britain's representative in Transjordan.

Then, as he had prophesied, Ibn Sa'ud once more swept across Arabia and marched into Mecca as a conqueror. The Foreign Office was worried. Their desire for peace in Arabia had been upset. There was only one thing to do about it. Philby must be sent to deal with the situation.

Philby went. With the swiftness that characterized all his movements on that sweltering peninsula he went direct to Ibn Sa'ud and saw him in his tent, and there, as man to man, they talked for many an hour. What happened in that tent nobody knows. Here were two men who understood each other perfectly, respected each other's intellect, recognized in one another qualities of greatness and reserve and tolerance. They were men of few words, but what they said at that strange meeting carried with it a wealth of meaning.

There was a quality of peace and calm majesty about this far-sighted Arab chief that appealed strongly to a man of Philby's character. Ibn Sa'ud was a man of high ideals and strict principles. His belief in the letter of the Koran was implicit and sincere. Smoking and drinking were abhorrent to him. His views on morality were high and unwavering. He was a man who had learned the great lesson that self-discipline must precede the imposition of order and discipline upon others.

Philby could understand a man like that. No matter what might be the destiny of this man of Arabia in a material sense, Philby saw in him, as they talked that night beneath the brilliant stars of an eastern sky, one of the "great ones" of the earth.

When he emerged that night from Ibn Sa'ud's tent Philby cabled to London his resignation of all his offices, promotions, ranks—everything. He made his decision to become a Wahhabi trader in Jidda and live on the edge of the desert that had shown him, side by side with its ugliness, some of life's greatest beauty.

Philby became finance minister to King Ibn Sa'ud, the palace at Jidda was placed at his disposal, and his "easy friendship" with the king was placed upon a permanent basis.

Each one of these milestones in the extraordinary career of this extraordinary man had a distant bearing upon the journey of 1932 that was to be the crowning point of his life.

But there were other, and more direct factors which set alight the fires of ambition within him. He had already established a

reputation as a great traveller when, at the end of the war, he crossed Arabia from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. Fully one-half of the country over which he travelled was unexplored and his journey enabled him to fill up on the map much of a large area that had hitherto been represented mostly by blanks.

At that time Philby was a young political officer attached to the British Army in Mesopotamia. He was charged with a mission to the Emir Ibn Sa'ud, then an ambitious prince of central Arabia, at Riyadh. Owing to the non-arrival there of an officer from Egypt, Philby went on from Riyadh to Jidda in order to fetch him. When he arrived at the Red Sea on December 31, 1917, he had made the crossing from sea to sea in forty-four days.

A week later he met the late Dr. D. G. Hogarth who talked to him of the Rub' al Khali and its strange legends, and from that time an insatiable desire to penetrate the innermost recesses of the Empty Quarter possessed him. The hope that one day he would be able to satisfy this great longing never left him, but fifteen years were to pass before he could carry out his plans.

During that time stories of a mysterious ruin in the heart of the sands and a great block of iron "as big as a camel" reached him from time to time and served only to fan the flames of his ambition. Well might these ruins be those of some long-forgotten city—all that remained of some past civilization—that might tell a story of Arabia that no one yet had dreamed of.

He had already, in his journey of 1917, skirted along the whole of the northern boundary of the Empty Quarter from east to west, but nothing would satisfy him but the journey south in search of the buried city and that great block of iron whose presence in the desert seemed extraordinary.

An expedition was planned in 1924. Philby had met Mrs. Rosita Forbes, and with her he intended to carry out at least a part of his plan. But illness and the revolution in Arabia upset his arrangements, and Mrs. Rosita Forbes crossed the Red Sea and went on to explore Abyssinia.

Soon after that Philby made his home in Jidda, living at the very fringe of the great desert he wished to conquer, his eyes turned always southwards, toiling and labouring always towards his goal.

Writing of those days of waiting "by the green waters of the Red Sea," Philby said: "The great peace of Islam slowly and surely descended upon me, enveloped me, who had known no peace before, in the austere mantle of Wahhabi philosophy which, tilting at the iniquities of the ungodly, had imposed a peace 'that passeth

all understanding' upon a country which since the beginning of time had known no peace but that of death and desolation."

During these days his friendship with the king of Arabia grew, he saw him daily, spoke to him frequently of his great ambition. It seemed, however, to be little nearer achievement until, in 1930, Philby accompanied the royal cavalcade to Riyadh and the king began to talk of an expedition to the Empty Quarter. Ibn Sa'ud knew well what was in Philby's heart, and he saw in him a instrument for the mapping and investigation of this great Empire of his that covered such vast tracts of unknown, shifting sands.

Philby's joy knew no bounds. The expedition became his sole pre-occupation, but still there were delays and disappointments—bitter disappointments. Opposition to the expedition came from one—Abdullah Ibn Jiluwi, Governor of the Hasa. Jiluwi had schemes of his own for extending his influence in the south, and he had no wish to be saddled with an expedition of this sort at such a time. He advised the king against it—and Philby had perforce to wait.

It was a bitter disappointment to him when, on March 6, he learned that Bertram Thomas had forestalled him. Thomas had won through the Rub' al Khali from the other side—but still he had not crossed the terrible gravel plain of Abu Bahr, the very heart of the dead country.

There was really no reason for haste, nor would the expedition suffer for the postponement, but to Philby, who had lived and dreamed of nothing else for so many years, this further period of waiting was almost intolerable.

The year went slowly by. December came, and still there was no word from Ibn Sa'ud. Then, one day when the king with some of his staff were sitting in the parlour of the palace discussing various matters, talk turned to the possibility of a European tour for the Prince Faisal. One of the officers of the court at once suggested, with a pleasant smile, that it would be a happy thought for Philby, who had been so long absent from his own country, to accompany His Highness the Prince.

"It is not of Europe that I am thinking these days," said Philby, and then, to his astonishment, King Ibn Sa'ud said the words he had been waiting so long to hear.

"No," said Ibn Sa'ud—and there was an indulgent twinkle in his eyes—"we will send Philby to the Empty Quarter."

It had come at last!

Philby lost no time. On Christmas Day, 1931, he arrived at

Hufuf to make final preparations. For a fortnight he explored the Hasa district, mapping it and making notes upon it while Jiluwi sent messengers far and wide to summon the necessary personnel for the trip.

Then a strange thing happened. Philby's endurance was stretched to breaking point. His dearest wish was about to be realized, the day he had waited for was about to dawn, but nothing seemed to be happening! Ibn Jiluwi went about his business in silence. So far as Philby's expedition was concerned he seemed to be completely inactive and indifferent. Philby could stand it no longer. He jumped in his car and went off to Uqair on the Persian Gulf on January 4, 1932. On his return the next day the car, with a good deal of his gear in it, became stuck in the sand and Philby had to return to Riyadh by other means.

As soon as he arrived Ibn Jiluwi sent him a message to say that men and camels were ready and he could start when he wished.

Here he was on the very threshold of the promised land, his nerves stretched to breaking point by repeated delays—and now he was not ready himself.

But this was only a temporary delay. Philby made arrangements for his kit to be collected from the stranded car at Uqair and made a rendezvous for camels, guides and all concerned at the wells at Dulaiqiya on January 6, and at nine o'clock on the morning of that day a small party of friends gathered to wish them farewell.

It was a dismal farewell. Their friends scarcely expected to see them again, and it was a cold, raw morning with a low fog hanging over the landscape. But Philby would not risk further delay. Word had come that the king was expected almost immediately at Hufuf and Philby was anxious to be off before he arrived and the consequent confusion caused further delay. There was always the possibility, too, that the king himself might hold up the expedition for a further period.

So, a few minutes after nine o'clock Philby's small cavalcade of cars swung out into the desert through the Victory Gate by which Ibn Sa'ud had entered Hufuf in triumph after the surrender of the Turkish garrison in 1913. The fog blotted out everything beyond two hundred yards and in a few seconds they had passed out of sight of those who had come to wish them well.

The great adventure had begun.

Not even the fog could dampen Philby's spirits. He felt as though a great burden had been lifted from his soul.

The journey to Dulaiqiya was soon accomplished and as Philby alighted from his car a dozen figures, like ghosts in their flowing Arab robes, loomed out of the fog to meet him. They had been cowering over the camp fire for warmth and, although they looked tough enough and rough enough for anything, they were all miserably cold.

The party was now complete except for four men who were to join them farther south, making up the complete party to nineteen. In addition to the leader Zayid ibn Munakhkhas and the deputy-leader and chaplain, Abdullah ibn Ma'addi, there were six representatives of the Murra tribe, two of the Manasir tribe, and three of the 'Ajman tribe, the three most important of the desert tribes, four non-tribal elements, and Sa'dan, Philby's personal servant.

There were thirty-two camels—all females except for one gelding—for themselves and their baggage, and they had stores for three months. Actually when they reached civilization again after two and a half months in the desert they had practically no food left at all. Dates and rice formed the principal diet, and they carried coffee, tea, sugar and butter, cardamom, cinnamon and onions, salt and pepper, etc.

Philby found that the Arabs had no desire at the moment to move from their fire, but he was determined to push on. He had done little real riding on camels for many months, and he felt that a short ride on the first day would be wise, apart from the urgency of getting as far away as possible from Hufuf and the possibility of being recalled.

Altogether it was an inauspicious start. When they pitched their tents at the end of that first day Philby thought, for a few bad moments, that the fates themselves were against him and that he would have to abandon his project at its very beginning. Cold and terribly stiff, he lay down by the camp fire while his Arab friends plied him with hot cups of coffee. Suddenly he felt ill. He got up, but could not walk. He staggered into the arms of one of the Arabs and knew no more.

He had fainted. He was only unconscious for a few minutes but during that time, so they told him later, his face went yellow and they thought he was going to die. He got straight into bed, wondering whether this was Nature's warning of some unsuspected illness, went straight to sleep—and awoke next morning without any ill-effects whatever.

Another unpleasant factor was the weather. Those first few

days in January were the coldest within the memory of living man in Arabia. Outside their tents in the morning after the first day's journey the thermometer recorded five degrees of frost. Their water skins were frozen so hard that they had to lay them round the fire to thaw them before they could make any coffee. The sand was so cold that it "burned" the soles of their feet like red-hot needles.

Within a few days it was once again unbearably hot.

The discomfort of this hazardous journey was not mitigated either by the fact that the whole party agreed to observe the Fast of Ramdhan. From an hour before dawn to sunset they fasted for thirty days, but actually only five of them including Philby, kept the fast for the whole of that time without a break. The others at various times claimed the privilege according to travellers of exemption from the full observance of the fast. During this period they had breakfast at sunset and dinner at 4 a.m., the menu being mostly the same for both meals, either rice or dates, or rice and dates, with an occasional hare which they captured on their journey, divided carefully in small fragments among the nineteen of them.

In a few days they were crossing the low-lying salt plains, penetrating farther into the desert, searching oases for reported ruins until they arrived at Jabrin, once the farthest outpost of Arab civilization towards the southern sands.

At Jabrin they came upon an old Arab, Jabir ibn Fasl, living with his family in a tumble-down hut like sentinels at the end of the world.

Jabir and his children were the last human beings any of them saw outside of their own party for 53 days—and it was typical of the hospitality of the man that, apart from killing for them a young camel, he gave them a dog which remained with them throughout the rest of the journey, riding precariously on the back of a camel when she was tired, and plunging down, like a high diver, at the sight of a hare or other game.

Here began their crossing of the Rub' al Khali. For days they had to rely for their water upon wells in unfrequented country which were in many cases covered deep in sand and completely unrecognizable to any but the keen eyes of the Arab guides.

All the while Philby was collecting specimens and fossils and stones to take back with him for expert examination in London. Some of them he had sent back to Hufuf by the old man Jabir, to whom he had given a present of money with which to buy things for his family in that lonely outpost dwelling of theirs.

Ever southward went Philby's cavalcade of camels, now searching for the mysterious hidden city of Wabar. They had had certain vague evidence of its existence all the way along. They had crossed the beds of two ancient rivers, long since dried up, but there was still a third—and the most important—to traverse. What more natural, thought Philby, than that one of the greatest capitals of pre-historic Arabia should be found on the banks of the greatest pre-historic river.

For fourteen years he had heard at different times of the ruins of this city of the desert, Bertram Thomas had heard of it the year before, and members of Philby's own party on this present trip confirmed him in his conviction that there was some great riddle of the sands to be discovered. He had even been able to mark on the map two probable sites from information that had been given him from time to time.

Now, as he approached one of the great objects of his quest, the strain of long days of living in the hills and valleys, of loose sand perpetually changing before his eyes, and of thinking about this buried city, brought it to him at night in strange dreams. He saw it in these dreams as a low, barrack-like place perpetually whirling round in the sand while he took bearings with his theodolite on a revolving floor.

At last they camped within a stone's throw of the spot where they expected to find these ruins, about which Arab historians had told so many strange stories.

The next day they marched on.

Then suddenly, "Look!" said one of the guides—and Philby had his first glimpse of this fabled city. His heart leapt as he saw what appeared to be a thin, low line of ruins riding on the sky-line of yellow sands.

Rapidly they pressed forward, to lose sight of the ruined city as they dropped into a shallow depression. Only a short while was left before darkness fell. Philby dismounted in the little hollow, and leaving his companions, walked up to the crest of the ridge to look down upon his great discovery while there was still light enough to see.

\* Here at last was the ancient capital of King 'Ad Ibn Kin'ad in which he had caroused with his concubines and his self-seeking companions until they had drawn upon themselves the wrath of Heaven, and fire had descended upon them and wiped them out, leaving the city in ruins.

So ran the legend, and Philby's mind was full of these things as

he drew near the top of the crest. In a moment he would look down upon a scene that no man had looked upon for thousands of years.

At last it was there before his eyes. He had fathomed the centuries-old legend of Wabar. He looked down upon the remains of an old volcano whose twin craters, encircled with low walls of slag and lava, half-filled with drifting sand, had given rise to the extravagant stories that had led him there.

That was Wabar, secret city of Arabian legend, buried city of the desert—just twin volcano craters lying side by side!

The great block of iron as big as a camel proved as big a disappointment. They did find a fragment of metal, obviously part of a large meteorite, which caused Philby later to incline to the belief that the two craters of Wabar may not, after all, have been of volcanic origin, but due to the impact of a great meteorite, a large piece of which may still lie buried in the sand somewhere nearby.

There was nothing for it but to push on, driving still deeper into country that was rapidly becoming more forbidding. Philby began to have more and more difficulty with the Arabs. They wanted to return to their homes. They grew more and more reluctant to go on to the dreaded mountains of Hadhramaut, the place of death.

One day one of them approached him and said: "We notice two things about you. Firstly, you are hot-tempered and easily get angry if we do not as you please. Secondly, you are every ready to disbelieve what the guides say. Tell me, were you like that from the day God created you? Surely you know that the guides do not lie deliberately, and this is their own country where they know every bush and every hummock. Why then should you suspect them of lying?"

Philby's tactful answer was the recital of a series of incontrovertible facts which left but one conclusion that even the Arab could not fail to perceive.

But the friction between Philby's passionate determination to see the thing through to the very end and the innate inertia of these men who wanted to get home grew more and more pronounced.

The Arabs used every argument they could conceive to turn him from his purpose. They whispered among themselves and came to him again and again with some new argument. Supposing he should never get through and anything happened to him while he were in their charge. The wrath of the king upon them might



even mean their death. But they would rather risk that than the death and danger of the black mountain.

They might at least be able to persuade the king that it was Philby's own insistent demands and his unreasonable persistence against the heaviest weight of their advice that had brought him to disaster.

But Philby knew his Arab! On they went to Shanna which marked the beginning of the last and most perilous stage of this great adventure. Now it was the prospect of the waterless desert, and fear of thirst and death that gave strength to the arguments of the Arabs. But Philby could not and would not yield to them. All the time he was faced with the spectre of complete disaster. They threatened to leave him, well knowing that he could not get through by himself. But they had been charged by the king's ministers that they should serve this man well, comply with his requests and bring him back in safety. They knew what would happen to them if they failed.

They were, of course, weak and disheartened with hunger. None of them had ever embarked on a venture of this kind before, and no human being, they declared truthfully, had ever attempted to cross this desert, this Empty Quarter, from side to side.

But Philby was too strong for them. They decided at last to make a dash at once across this great waterless tract to Sulaiyil, three hundred and sixty miles to the west.

But conditions grew worse, nerves more thinly frayed. The pastures suddenly ceased and an endless desert of bare, bleak sand took its place. Even animal life seemed to have disappeared, there was no game to hunt, even the camels began to show signs that they were distressed by the rigours of the journey. Again the Arabs began to whisper.

But they had come one hundred and forty miles and had more than one-third of their journey behind them and Philby knew that a steady effort would carry them through if only the Arabs would play the man. He knew what they were suffering, for he suffered with them. Their hunger was painful, for they had eaten nothing but dates since leaving Shanna, four days back.

"I felt like Moses in the wilderness with the multitude clamouring against him," was Philby's own description of this difficult period.

They went on still farther into this drought and famine-stricken land. No rain had been reported in this heat-blackened, desolate country for twenty years. The very bushes had been slowly stricken

to death from the heat, the lack of water and the lack of sustenance.

But Philby was not deterred. He pushed on through that fifth day, though the only sign of life throughout the day was one solitary raven and one tiny desert warbler. And on this day even the camels gave out. At midday they topped a rise and saw their own tents pitched there ahead of them. Something, obviously was wrong. It was, of course, the practice to send the baggage camels by different routes and make a rendezvous to be kept by both parties.

But this was not in the programme. Philby hurried forward, and there, sure enough he found disaster. The camels were lying sheltering against the sun in the shadow of the tent canvas. They had collapsed from sheer fatigue. They could not possibly go on without water.

Philby wanted to press on, lion-hearted as he was, with a smaller party to make a dash for the remaining two hundred and forty miles of the journey with what remained of the water after the rest of the party, who were forced to retreat, had had their share. But for once the Arabs had their way. Philby had to compromise. Retreat—for all of them—was the only thing. The camels were watered, the men, after five days of diet of dates, insisted on a dish of rice, and the whole cavalcade went on the next day to the wells of Naifa, one hundred and twenty miles away.

And there Philby had his first drink of water since he had left Hufuf.

Then, strangely enough, storms broke. Rain fell, there was thunder and lightning, whirlwinds caught up the sand and flung it along the landscape in terrible black columns like a supernatural army marching across the sky. Typhoons swept down, uprooting the tents and burying everything in sand.

But the end of the journey was approaching. On March 5 they set out for the last dash across the waterless waste. The baggage party had been sent back by the water route to Riyadh and a smaller party with all the water available put out into the naked, lifeless sands. This was the worst section of any they had come through. There were no bushes, no pasturage of any sort for the animals to browse upon. Even the birds had vanished. Some small desert animal that had miraculously strayed into this plain of death had sunk down in its last agonies and died, and not even the ravens had come to pick its bones. Its flesh had dried upon it, leaving only a framework of skin and bones.

There were only a few more days to go, but they had not yet got

through their greatest difficulties. Not even the Arabs had imagined this country could be so devoid of vegetation. This great gravel plain of Abu Bahr was like nothing they had ever seen before, and they had omitted to provide themselves with fuel for their fire.

It was, perhaps, the most critical day of the whole of Philby's dreadful journey.

March 11, 1932.

Three days later they were back in civilization.

But that day, they were desperate. They must find forage. They had to find fuel. There was not even a blade of dry grass in that arid waste of gravel. They had started their last great push at 2 o'clock that morning. At 9.30 p.m., nearly twenty hours later, they were still on the march; and all day long the Arabs had pressed on their animals to the utmost.

It was an effort Philby never forgot.

Used as he was to moving swiftly about Arabia and Mesopotamia, the efforts of the Arab camel drivers that day moved him to admiration. They drove their animals, already broken with heat and hunger, as he had never seen camels driven before—and they themselves were in as bad, or worse, a plight.

But they made it. They halted and they slept. For the first time in the whole of his experience Philby himself had been the first to clamour for a halt. True they had no fuel. The Arabs, whose whole existence was coffee, were unable to satisfy their appetites that night. The next day they came early to fuel, and their need for coffee and tea was at last satisfied for the first time for twenty-seven hours. They found fodder for the camels and they camped that night with herbage around them fed by streams from the mountains.

Next day, on the very eve of victory, they made fifty miles in conditions they had not experienced for three hundred miles. The going was paradise compared with the privations and difficulties of the journey they had just been through. Animal life, of which they had scarcely seen a sign for those three hundred miles of sheer desert, began to appear. They were on the threshold of civilization again.

Next morning, March 14, they saw mankind again. They had emerged from a country as stark and bare and inanimate as death itself and, as Philby himself says, they were welcomed by "the mayor and corporation" of Sulaiyil as the first people in human history who had found their way across that inconceivable Empty Quarter.

Philby's achievement may not have been a story that can be told in the headlines of a newspaper, but it was one of the greatest achievements in the history of adventure and exploration, because it brought forth some of the finest qualities of man in its accomplishment.

Philby has been back to the Empty Quarter since that memorable day—in a car and accompanied by his wife, to whom in one of his books he pays this tribute that she bore, with his mother, "the brunt of my long travail through anxious years, and to whom I dedicate this record of my wanderings through the Empty Quarter."

# WALLED IN BY DEATH

By

HUGH BROADBRIDGE

**M**AFEKING was unsuccessfully besieged for seven months and yet might have been taken by the Boers at any moment. Looking back over nearly forty years, with a vast war in the middle distance to ruin the perspective, it seems that a lot of unnecessary fuss was made about a little town on the Bechuanaland frontier. But Mafeking, now grown to man's estate, was in actual fact a key position made valuable out of all proportion by Boer intentions.

The bitterness of relations preceding the South African War have passed into history. Stories of the campaign can, however, be told again for their heroism, their tragedy or their endurance without probing the dreary causes of war. The siege of Mafeking was the most remarkable in a war of sieges.

When it was obvious that heated discussions were bound to end in bloodshed on a large scale, the British government began to consider, far too late, that South African garrisons needed reinforcement. On July 25, 1899, Brevet-Colonel R. S. S. Baden-Powell, who was in the Colonial Office, arrived in Cape Town with orders to raise two regiments of mounted infantry, to prepare the defence of the frontiers of Bechuanaland and Rhodesia, and to keep as many as possible of the enemy occupied away from their main forces if and when the war began. He was an uncommon type of army officer, one who combined in a curious way the trained fighter and the soldier of fortune. The official history of the war summed him up in a telling sentence as being "animated by that disciplined unrest which not only leads men out of the beaten path, but empowers them to beat out paths of their own."

He at once chose Mafeking for his headquarters, firstly, because it was in the centre of a coloured population of a quarter of a million and itself had native inhabitants outnumbering the whites by six to one. Boer aims were the same as the British where the blacks were concerned, for it was vital for each belligerent to impress them with their power and importance. Secondly, the town was a half-way house between Cape Colony and Rhodesia, and formed

an outpost to the north for one and to the south for the other. Finally, as a base for a roving force, it had immense possibilities. It flanked the Transvaal and was favourably placed to be a thorn in the side of Johannesburg and Pretoria commandos.

Owing to early arrangements, or because they believed that no adequate defence of Mafeking could ever be made, the Boers made the town a signal. When it fell to them, war was to blaze out simultaneously across the width and length of South Africa. The long siege did not prevent that war, but it did two things. It prevented fighting breaking out instantly in Cape Town and the south and it gave the British government time to mend their dilatory ways. That was grand for everybody except the garrison of the town.

Baden-Powell was determined to focus Boer attention on himself and to keep a large number of their men anchored around the town. In the short time at his command, he raised the two regiments required of him, the Protectorate and Rhodesia regiments. The latter, under Lieutenant-Colonel Plumer, was ordered north, the other was retained at Mafeking under Lieutenant-Colonel Hore. It was shortly obvious that the town was to be assaulted by the Boers and defence became an object of peculiar urgency. To be faced by growing numbers of men known to be enemies and to have no hint of when a blow is to be struck is a harrowing state of affairs. With limited means, Baden-Powell dealt brilliantly with the situation. He had no help save from his own men and the townspeople. Mafeking was defended in every sense of the word by the men within its walls of baked mud.

Nature, like the government, had done nothing to help the town's defence. It stood on the right bank of a lengthy depression which, whether there was water in it or not, was known as the Malopo River. All around, the brown veld undulated for miles, the only eminence of note being Cannon Kopje, more than a mile to the south-east. The reservoir, a priceless possession, was in the one place which made its capture easy. Roughly, the town was a thousand yards square. It was on the east side of the railway and had an extremely doubtful asset in the large native *stadt* at its south-western corner. Even if the six thousand Barolong remained loyal to Britain, or at least, neutral, their hutted ground blinded the whole defence of that area. There was no trench, no redoubt, no look-out and no fort except a shattered relic of the Bechuana War on Cannon Kopje.

Before the first shots were fired on October 14, Baden-Powell

had devised no less than sixty defence works. While this anxious labour was being directed, he had to attend to the evacuation of women and children, train his men, implore the government to do something and stave off the inevitable. Boer orders were reputed to say that none of their men should cross the border till the British fired a shot. Like most wars, nobody knew who loosed off the first when it did happen.

A special train, which left the town with refugees on October 11, was refused by many of the townsfolk. They did not believe then that anything very terrible would happen. Besides, many had Dutch sympathies and looked for an early conquest of Mafeking. As things happened, these people became a fearful drain on the resources of the town and a great number did not earn their keep in any way.

By the 12th, when the last train started south, the ring of Mafeking's defences covered a perimeter of ten miles. It consisted of short entrenchments, zarebas of thorn, redoubts and protective banks, some connected by telephone to headquarters in the town. Some were dummies intended to draw fire and waste Boer ammunition. They rejoiced in such names as Fort Ayr, Fort Nelson, Fort Ramathlabama and other impressive titles. They succeeded even more than had been hoped in preventing Boer attackers from having the open streets as their first contact with the defence.

It was the last train of October 12 that brought the news which had been awaited so long. Boers stopped it and told of a large force of their men farther south. After a discussion, the train headed back, bringing to Mafeking still more hungry mouths and the shock of knowing at last that the town was cut off. The telegraph wires were cut at the same time. Quietly, the garrison of twelve hundred men, which included all railway employees and a coloured contingent, went to its posts. But the final explosion was delayed for another forty-eight hours. Before that moment came, General Piet Kronje and ten thousand men were massed along the border seven miles away. And, at dawn on October 14 patrols out to the north ran into some scattered Boer forces and a hot fight began at once. The campaign, and the siege which produced among other brave deeds three which won the Victoria Cross, had begun.

One of the main weapons of defence perfected by Baden-Powell came at once into action. This was an armoured train intended to range up and down a limited track. The steel-sheeted, snorting

contraption was of enormous value, for it was Mafeking's one mobile fort. Armed with a Maxim automatic gun and many riflemen, it puffed out to meet the trouble in the north and found it successfully. Firing became so heavy that a troop under Captain FitzClarence was sent out to help. The movement was so cleverly carried out that the train was rescued from a nasty situation and a large Boer force thrown back with heavy losses. For this, FitzClarence earned the first V.C. of the war.

Baden-Powell had laid a few small mines outside the town. Fear of these unseen traps was increased in the Boer mind by ingenious means. It was necessary to rid the town of a couple of trucks of dynamite. The driver of the armoured train was therefore directed to push the trucks up the line until he had attracted attention from the Boers. He was then to drive back like the devil. The trucks were duly surrounded and subjected to a devastating fire. At the proper moment, the dynamite could stand it no longer and went up with a thunderous noise, raising a superb mushroom of smoke, scaring the Boers into flight and hurting nobody at all. The engine-driver swung on the whistle-valve and sent a shrill jeer after the running Boers. Then he went clanking into shelter, shouting like a Dervish. No blood had been spilt, but much virtue had been acquired.

It was dreadfully obvious, the moment that artillery bombardments began, that Mafeking was hopelessly outgunned by the Boers. They had new Krupps and the Maxims, while the town had a one-pounder Hotchkiss, a two-inch Nordenfeldt and four seven-pounders that had been old in Cetewayo's day. The rotting carriages of these ancient weapons were repaired and their elevating gear made to work, but each discharge sent them nearer and nearer to a senile end. The ammunition they fired had been so long in store that the fuses had shrunk and had to be jammed into the shells with paper. These armaments were later augmented by a naval gun dug up in the town. It was of a pattern which Nelson would have criticized adversely, but, alongside the rest of the battery, it was perfectly in keeping.

During the days preceding the use of artillery on either side, Kronje and his ten thousand could easily have walked over the defenders, who had only six hundred magazine rifles among them. It will always be a mystery why they failed to do so. Kronje undoubtedly knew how badly the garrison was armed because espionage was so easy. But he was desperately afraid of mines and may have doubted his spies when the defending fire made



up in spirit what it lacked in accuracy. Further, he was a man who hated to shed one drop of blood unnecessarily. But this was war. Had he lost a few men at the beginning, he would have saved hundreds of lives later on.

A high moral tone characterized all exchanges between the rival commanders. Kronje sent in a runner with a courteous advice that he was about to begin artillery fire and truces were regularly agreed by message and white flag to pick up wounded and bury dead. These were rigidly respected by both sides.

When bombardment or other danger threatened the town, a red flag flew over Baden-Powell's headquarters in the hotel and a red lantern by night. The Union Jack or a white light proclaimed that all was well. Later, when the direction of gunfire could be ascertained because the guns were well in sight, a system of alarm bells forecasted the quarter of the town likely to be hit.

Water was very soon reduced to wells dug by the garrison for the reservoir was captured and the supply turned off. An attempt to recover it was repulsed. The town then settled down to siege, the civilians to gossip, work at supplies and trade souvenirs, the garrison to a weary round of trench-manning, raiding and sniping. Espionage was rife and successful. The area was too scantily guarded to prevent innumerable natives from getting through the lines and Dutch sympathizers in the town were always active. The jail bulged with them, but there were plenty more still at liberty.

After the first few days of bombardment, Kronje humanely offered to stop if Mafeking would surrender. Baden-Powell could not accept. His only regret was the civilians, but most of these were in the town by their own choice and could not, therefore, be allowed to sway the decision. There were, too, the undeniable fact that the bombardment was largely ineffective. Heavy loss of life had been prevented by bad Boer shooting and by the mud-brick houses of the town itself. There were no upper storeys to crash down and no heavy debris at all. Dug-outs, occupied the moment alarms went, further reduced risk.

Casualties were in actual fact very small. Shells of those days had none of the shattering power of modern high explosives. There were a lot of duds and many of these were afterwards responsible for deaths. Debris hunters emerged after every bombardment and sometimes a secondary barrage announced that cautious optimists had reached Valhalla through making their finds safe to handle. It was often only possible to identify them by

a process of elimination. Such was the carelessness after a while that one defender was seen to be extracting a fuse from a ninety-four-pounder shell while smoking his pipe. When a burning wisp of tobacco fell, he vanished to the accompaniment of a staggering explosion.

The weary day was sometimes brightened for the besieged by a native runner getting through with news. Very often, it was garbled and highly coloured stuff, but it was something different and it was magnified into a delusion that there was after all some sort of contact with the world outside. One genuine news item was that Kronje had decided to hasten the surrender of the town by ordering up a really big gun. The size, of course, was exaggerated. One Kaffir stated with authority that an ox could walk down the muzzle with the greatest of ease, and, while the anxious garrison watched emplacements being made for it, the stories grew in scope. The ox was replaced by an elephant and then brought back to keep the pachyderm company in an imaginary walk down the maw of the new gun.

The weapon arrived on October 23, and opened fire on the following morning. The first two shells blundered over Mafeking like colossal maybugs and vanished into the remoter parts of Bechuanaland. The third dropped into the town's acetylene plant and started a bad fire. Others registered hits at various points, while one dud ended a promising career in a stock-room of tinned provisions. At that time, when food was still plentiful, the garrison maintained that it was less dangerous than the rest of the contents of the room.

It was discovered that the gun was a ninety-four-pounder, and that it was fired by a German expert specially imported for the occasion. When the casualties caused by its first use were listed as three men slightly wounded, Mafeking took heart of grace. The gun was called Aunt Sally, Big Ben, Her Ladyship, and other pet names. With reference to the shells fired by the weapon, the old boxing saw that "the bigger they are, the harder they fall" was not borne out.

But the daily rain of shells continued and the big gun took a slow toll of lives. This was reduced to a minimum by the alarm bells. In the intervals, raids were frequently made by the British, with the idea of impressing their perky spirit on the enemy. Humane feelings still persisted after furious battles. On the morning after a raid by FitzClarence which had developed into a major fight, Baden-Powell sent out a white flag and a message

asking for a truce to bring in wounded. Botha, in command of the section concerned, sent back this immortal letter.

*Sir,—In reply to your request of this morning, I inform you that on arrival of this note at its destination an armistice for two hours will be granted in order to remove your dead and wounded. Your dead and wounded will be brought to the main road, along which your men must be brought to fetch them.*

*We also hold two of your men prisoners, who, of course, will not be handed over. They are quite well.*

*I have the honour to be, sir,*

*Your obedient servant,*

*J. D. S. BOTHA,*

*Commandant, Marico Laager.*

At the end of October, the Boers enlivened the monotony of shellfire by launching a fierce attack on Cannon Kopje. It came within an ace of succeeding for a shell dropped right among the defenders and killed or wounded most of them. But this happened just when their rifle fire had seriously depleted advancing Boer ranks, and, as usual, rather than lose more men, the advance stopped and did not begin again. Early in November, a raid under Major Godley to the west of the main Boer camp was successfully conducted to remind the enemy that the spirit of the garrison was unbroken.

Kronje's reputation began to suffer and, when events in the south gave him an excuse, he left the besieging forces and handed over to General Snyman. The new commander believed to the full in the effect of blockade and sat down to starve the town into submission. For weeks, something akin to boredom settled on the garrison. There were no attacks with which to grapple, no sign of real warfare except a lackadaisical dose of gunfire which occasioned neither comment nor fear. By the middle of December, the total number of British killed was under a hundred and the majority of these had been killed in the fighting outside.

Christmas followed on a terrific thunderstorm which flooded every trench and started an outbreak of fever. Although food was still plentiful, rations were introduced in view of the unknown future. The rule was only broken on Christmas Day when a huge spread was given in the hotel. It was like the special breakfast for condemned men for, on Boxing Day, an attack was made on one of the Boer forts in which twenty-four were killed. Espionage within and poor reconnaissance without lost the day. Only

hesitancy on the part of the Boers saved a real disaster. Even then, the raiders only just brought off a difficult retreat in which Sergeant Martineau and Trooper Ramsden of the Protectorate regiment both won the Victoria Cross.

The gloom resulting from the defeat was deepened by a runner who entered the town with news of the shambles at Colenso and Stormberg. On January 2, two more runners came in from Kimberley and the sole burden of the news they brought was to the effect that Mrs. Butler was quite well. The garrison was naturally relieved to hear that the lady was enjoying robust health, but, as not one single soul in Mafeking had the slightest idea who she was, the humour of the thing did much to cheer people up again.

Melnite, a new explosive, was now tried by the Boers, but without notable success. Then shells filled with phosphorus began to fall in the town. Here again, though a few fires started, the idea did not work out well. Another scheme was defeated only by sheer luck. The Boers loaded a boggy with dynamite, put a fuse on it and sent it hurtling along the railway line towards the town. A wheel-jam spilt the cargo and it went up harmlessly. If the boggy had careered into Mafeking station yard, a large part of the town would certainly have been wrecked. The lesson was absorbed and sandbags were placed on the rails to prevent a repetition of this ingenious idea.

In the separate camp allotted to women, which had seven hundred occupants, epidemics began to appear. Diphtheria, typhoid and smallpox all occurred and gave the weary medical staff far more than they could do. Irish Sisters of Mercy in the town and many of the English women took over nursing and incredible deeds of unselfish bravery and devotion were done. Somehow the grim spectre of disease was held back though never driven completely away.

Every day brought a crop of false rumours and alarms. An out-of-work statistician recorded over three thousand during the siege. Every day saw the food rationing tightened. Many items were vanishing from the menu and no man in the garrison looked well fed. Tempers became uncertain from boredom and privation. There was a lot of grousing, none of which was translated into action. The hopelessness of the situation, with no ray of light in a black future, deadened some people and made others desperate. It was particularly hard on the non-combatants who had no relief in fighting.

Two Irish engineers turned to invention and achieved something

that every metal-worker in the town had said was impossible. From an iron drain-pipe, rings of cast iron and pieces of enemy shells, they fashioned a gun. It was a crazy affair of howitzer pattern and designed to deliver any missiles that might be handy. These varied from Boer duds to projectiles of ancient shape. Set up with the old naval gun that had been dug up, it showed to great advantage. On one momentous day, it flung a shell three thousand yards. The gun came into regular use like all the others and did good service. Even the excavated naval gun had its victories. Sometimes the Boers received its missiles first bounce, and there was one tremendous occasion when a hoary old cannon ball hurdled across the veld, hit a rock and jumped the Boer camp like a spring-bok. Even the ranks of Tuscany could scarce forbear to cheer.

At this time, too, a British raid carried a Boer trench in an outlying brickfield which was held. It brought the rival forces within a hundred yards of each other in that sector and resulted in a daily exchange of backchat which was a great relief to all. Friendly shooting at bottles sometimes took place which often degenerated into a real fight when some misguided sniper drilled one of the judges. There were times when war became a vulgar brawl and men threw stones at each other. Anything was better than the same old war.

But misery in the town was slowly growing all the time. And, if the garrison was stiffly rationed, the Barolongs in the native *stadt* were actually starving. Boer spies discovered the fact and endeavoured to play on the natives' desperation to make them rise and overwhelm the town. When this failed, they made a dreadful mistake. Believing that a taste of fire would finally snap the restraint of the starving blacks, they shelled the kralls. As a result, the British acquired six thousand physically weakened but ferocious allies. A very real anxiety was taken from Baden-Powell's mind.

Gradually, the Boer forces slumped into inactivity. Even the big gun was covered up and only cleared for action when the British deliberately goaded it with irritating stings from their battered seven-pounders. Sometimes this developed into an artillery duel distinguished by complete ineffectiveness on both sides. The Boers, however, achieved one classic performance when a couple of opening shots from Aunt Sally were aimed so high that they landed in their compatriots' camp on the other side of Mafeking. Interest in gunnery faded again.

But, while a kind of peace reigned, hunger stalked more openly every day. In the native *stadt* there were heart-rending sights. The

survival of the fittest was grimly being played out. Those poor skeletons who fell and failed to rise were mercilessly thrown out on the veld. Food was stolen a dozen times before it was eaten. Fights were commonplace.

Baden-Powell started soup-kitchens where horses were boiled in cauldrons and the worst misery was somewhat alleviated. But still the hungry blacks wandered and stole. They were at the last gasp. The town's large population of dogs began to shrink. Rubbish was turned over and over and the most appalling pieces of decomposing food were eaten with relish. Locusts that came in April, the sixth month of the siege, were caught in thousands and performed the most useful function they had ever done. In the garrison, the daily ration dropped to a four-ounce *chupatty* mixed with chaff and a scrap of horse, donkey or mule meat. Black coffee without sugar was the standard drink.

Plucky night raids on the Boer cattle were made by natives who more often than not paid for it with their lives. But occasionally there was a success and a small ration of really nourishing food resulted. The Rhodesian regiment, under Colonel Plumer, had now worked up near to the Boer camps and attempted to send in cattle. The enemy fed well on the result.

But Plumer's appearance made the Boers think. His sudden movements and ceaseless reconnaissance left them uncertain of the size of his force, of the shape of his intentions. Unfortunately, he fell in with an unexpected Boer force, lost twenty men and many horses, and had to retire. Mafeking's hopes dwindled again.

At the end of April, a grandson of President Kruger, Field Cornet Eloff, joined the besieging troops and his influence obtained permission for one of the best actions the Boers carried out during the whole siege. It had a tragic ending, from their point of view, but it was brilliantly begun. They attacked the vulnerable wing where the native *stadt* acted as a screen. One column made a lightning attack, entered the *stadt* and fired many huts. While the glare and confusion attracted the defenders, a second column assaulted and took the fort outside, which had been held till then by the Protectorate Regiment. This was done unseen, and a hot fire poured into the British ranks from a position they thought to be their own.

It might have been fatal and very nearly was. The Boers, however, paid for mistaken tactics when they attempted to stir up revolt in the native *stadt*. When their attacking force entered, the Barolongs let many go in unchecked. Then they turned, isolated the

intruders and beat the others off with ferocity. British soldiers were able to leave this wing of the action entirely to the Barolongs and devote their attention to the fort. They surrounded it and began to snipe at the loopholes. The Boers surrendered after several hours and victory came from the brink of defeat. Two hundred Boers in the native *stadt* ran the gauntlet of a hot fire with only a few losses. No captives were taken because of the food shortage.

Horse meat was now reduced to a ration every other day, for the horses themselves were skeletons. Milk was almost unobtainable and many people in the town took to staring out over the bleached distances, hopeless eyes striving to see a relieving force that was not there. Certain signs began, however, to show that the Boers were uneasy. Shelling began again and the customary truce on Sundays was regularly broken. There were frequent movements in their camps as though alarming news kept coming in. Sometimes a unit moved out and did not return.

These signs increased and at last a runner got through with news of a British relief column on the way. Baden-Powell got ready to co-operate and prepared a mobile force of two hundred men and two guns. He was worried by the fact that De la Rey, an able strategist, had taken over the Boer camp from Snyman.

But all went well. Colonel Mahon's column of eleven hundred men joined with Plumer at Massibi and began a combined offensive to save the town. De la Rey's enveloping attack was beaten back with the aid of the Royal Horse Artillery and a cavalry attack followed up which forced a quick retirement. Mahon and Plumer halted seven miles from the town and rested. Half an hour after midnight on May 17, the last march began. The garrison of Mafeking was now in a grandstand from which they watched the final scenes portrayed on the night sky by gun flashes. They cheered and screamed with joy as the Boers faded doggedly into the distance. And, at 3.30, the war-stained town, softened by moonlight, greeted its deliverers. Towards the end of the day, after the surrounding country had been cleared, garrison and relievers paraded and people went crazy with joy.

Mafeking defied siege for two hundred and seventeen days and twenty thousand projectiles fell in the town. Military gain from its relief was small; the psychological value was incalculable. Kruger had annexed both Mafeking and Kimberley by proclamation; yet neither place became his. The Boer forces suffered greatly in morale because of that. And one of the most extraordinary sieges in history left the besiegers lamenting.

# BLASTING A CONTINENT IN TWO

By  
MILES HENSLOW

ON first thoughts one would hardly associate the digging of a canal with great adventure; the Panama Canal, in particular, conjures up little more than respect for a successful engineering feat. Refer to it in almanack or guide-book, and note its simple details:

"Panama Canal . . . Length fifty and a half miles; depth forty-five feet. Width three hundred feet."

But now read between those cold facts, and know the drama that was enacted to bring them into being—a drama which lasted more than thirty years, a tale of magnificent endeavour and tragic failures, of death, disillusionment and disaster. It is a story which begins as a dream, a full three hundred and fifty years before its first ambitious chapter was written.

When strangers from across the uncharted waters first sighted America in 1492, they looked upon a line of unbroken coast which stretched for endless miles from north to south. The two Americas were then one, bounded on the east by the Atlantic and on the west by the mighty Pacific; but it was not until a score more years had passed that the very existence of that vast western sea was proved. A year later, however, the Spaniards discovered a narrow strip of land which linked the two Americas together, and dreamed of an artificial waterway through which their ships might pass. But that dream remained a dream for centuries, and though the two oceans lashed the rugged coasts of that narrow strip of land, separated only by a mere fifty miles of hills and forests, many hundreds of miles of angry waters and adverse winds lay between those brave mariners and their Pacific goal.

It was not until 1850 that a ship canal was seriously proposed, and engineers considered the task of cutting a way across the continent. When Cortes, in 1530, had searched for either a natural passage or a point which could be pierced, the canal idea was rejected in Spain by a courtier, who declared that "If God had wished for such a channel He would have opened one for Himself."



And truly, in the light of events which followed with the years of heart-breaking endeavour, it seemed as though that noble of old Spain had spoken prophetically. In 1858 a concession was obtained from the Nicaraguan Government and Costa Rica for the purpose of building a canal. Workshops were erected, and surveyors began to explore the line along which it was proposed to drive the waterway; but financial support was not forthcoming, and the first of the long-dreamed efforts came to naught. A second attempt was made by American enterprise in 1870, but that, too, got no further than the preliminary expedition. Five years later another voyage of exploration was embarked upon, followed by still more proposals and as many as eight or nine schemes before the year 1880.

It was then that Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps, a Frenchman, put forward his scheme for a canal across the Panama isthmus, but that, also, was opposed by the American authorities. Monsieur de Lesseps was used to opposition, however; and, more important, he was used to overcoming it. He and none other had carried the dream of the Suez Canal from vague plans to triumphant conclusion, in the face of every form of hostility and open disbelief, until the very men who had scorned his ambitions had learned to laud him—had even decorated him. De Lesseps had, by his Suez triumph, brought riches to those who had trusted his faith, and honour to his native country. In return, honours had been showered upon him: Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour being but one of his well-earned rewards.

Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps had already begun a series of lectures in defence of his scheme. At Amiens, in 1879, he had announced that, all being well, a public subscription would be opened within a matter of months, and that shortly afterwards he himself would set out for the isthmus. In his ambitious dreams he visualized the turning of the first sod on New Year's Day, 1880. He portrayed how, with some thirty thousand to forty thousand navvies, the work could be completed within seven or eight years. Some of these navvies would be Chinese, but at least fifteen thousand of them would be free negroes from Brazil, whom the Emperor Pedro would doubtless agree to send. In July that year, at a lunch given in his honour, he announced that the Panama scheme would be launched that month, with an issue of eight hundred thousand shares, each of five hundred francs—then about £20,000,000. At a breakfast two days later, an American pressman, toasting the scheme in reply to a toast to American co-operation, said boldly:

"The country of George Washington will give unlimited assistance to the country of Lafayette."

Slowly but surely, fired by his own indomitable enthusiasm, France took up De Lesseps's cause. At Rouen a week later he reminded his hundreds of hearers of the difficulties he had overcome in the Suez task; he told them that the Panama Canal could be started at once, that though it would be a long task, filled with difficulties and the same opposition, it could be completed within a few years. The Pope himself conferred his blessing upon the proposed work, expressing his view that, morally even more than materially, it might bring about a bond of union between the two worlds.

In spite of all this optimism and faith, however, the American Government took no active interest in the proposed canal; indeed it was actually said that no action was necessary to protect American interests, primarily because the route selected for the canal was considered impracticable, and secondly, because the scheme was considered almost certain to end in failure as a result of insufficient financial support and American co-operation. But, in spite of all this and more, De Lesseps continued to fight for the realization of his dream. Argument after argument was thrown down to challenge his ambitious hopes, but he answered them all with the confidence that only a man with supreme faith can have. The same prejudices about the difference in levels of the two seas, he said, answering one attack, were put forward when the Suez scheme was still on paper. The Suez Canal was built. The Panama Canal could also be built; the engineers had reported nothing which could not be overcome. He spoke again on these lines in Liverpool early in 1880, amid great applause. He announced that a contract was already proposed with a reliable firm to carry out the work for five hundred million francs—some twenty million pounds—and that it might even be possible to complete the task within six years.

At last the scheme was launched, and in America, whence some of the greatest opposition and doubt had been heard, private subscribers took up no fewer than thirty-six thousand shares on the first day. A day later this total was increased to sixty-three thousand shares, and within a week the total number applied for in all countries had reached about one and a quarter millions. Even those who had doubted were forced to admit the enormous success of the scheme, and they were further encouraged to learn that preliminary negotiations were already well in hand. On January 6,

1881, the first party of men left Paris for Panama—forty-eight engineers and workmen—and M. de Lesseps accompanied them to the St. Lazare station, whence they departed, cheered to the echo as the train carried them out of sight on the first stage of their journey. The great adventure had begun.

On January 31, 1881, the first constitutive meeting of the Panama Canal Company's shareholders was held in Paris, and every class of shareholder was well represented, from beribboned capitalist with his twenty-five thousand holding to maid-servants in prim white bonnets. Amid storms of applause, Ferdinand de Lesseps, chairman of the concern and originator of the scheme, was hailed as the greatest genius on earth. Nine days later a telegram from Panama announced the arrival of the engineers at the isthmus. By February 24 it was further announced that five survey camps had been set up, and that the entire party was at work.

In the issue of the *Panama Star and Herald* of February 3 it was recorded that the workers had been met, as they had left their native soil, with cheers ringing in their ears. No time was lost, and before long more satisfactory reports were on their way to Paris. The location of the line was determined, timber was being cleared preparatory to preliminary excavations; arrangements of such matters as rights of way and title deeds were well in hand. Soon, very soon, the actual task of "splitting the continent in two" would be begun. It was realized, of course, that a vast amount of work would be necessary before any swift progress could be made. Organization of local details, such as the collection of gear—machinery for dredging, drilling, blasting and clearing rocks and earth—must necessarily take time; quite probably a year or more must elapse before even the mechanical side of the operations would be in full swing; but meanwhile there was labour enough to be found on the isthmus itself to cope with such work as could be started right away.

Alas for high hopes and ambitions! Those who waited so eagerly in Paris for news of De Lesseps's great scheme were not to know the full nature of the task that lay before that little band of men so many hundreds of miles away across the mighty ocean. Even the men themselves had not the slightest conception of what they were up against. Fired with enthusiasm they set to work, and the splendid optimism which surrounded the affair in Paris was echoed in Panama. The great Sarah Bernhardt went there, and a special performance was given at the local theatre. France was, once more, to have the honour of a great engineering triumph,

and Frenchmen all over the world were happy in the knowledge of it.

The Panama Canal was a big task, and the company started it on a big scale—big salaries, spacious buildings for engineers, labourers, and machinery. Thousands of workers were imported, and the line along which the sea would one day flow was attacked with energy and determination. Even as the workers toiled, contracts were placed for the finest machinery. Nothing was spared; least of all money.

Bigger than the task in hand, however, was the country; and the army of workers were not long in finding out the first of the obstacles which had not been mentioned when the scheme was launched. Those things could not have been mentioned—because no one thought of them; and because no one thought of them no provision was made for them. The isthmus, to those who waited at home for news, was nothing more than a strip of land which had to be pierced; but those who were trying to pierce it soon learned its worst secret. It was swampy; furthermore, in every hollow and crevice there were swarms—myriads—of mosquito larvæ. Fever broke out—first malaria, and then yellow fever. Workmen and engineers fell ill and died. The fever spread, and they died like flies, hundreds of them every month.

Death in any circumstances has a demoralizing effect, but when it occurs on a tremendous scale amongst an army of men, unprepared for it, and unable to escape, the results are too obvious to need detailed description. To make matters worse, with the tremendous influx of workers had come a large number of the type who spelled trouble. Amongst the thousands of honest workers these parasites found good pickings. Gambling orgies, and almost every conceivable form of vice took root, and spread like the fevers until Panama became not only one of the most unhealthy spots within thousands of miles, but also the most loose and lawless. The fact that men never knew, from one day to another, when they would be stricken with disease did not help. They lived as they pleased, sparing no thoughts for a future which might not exist for them.

None of this news reached France, where it was still thought that everything was proceeding according to plan; therefore it was not until too late that any measures were taken to stem the tide of disaster. Things went from bad to worse. Political troubles were added to the chaos. It was suggested that France had ideas of annexing or controlling the Panama isthmus. Fighting broke out,

and American battleships appeared on the scene to quell the disorders. The work which was progressing, slower, much slower than had been expected, began to fall off, and it was realized suddenly that the available funds would be quite inadequate for the mighty task. Instead of adhering to the original plan of M. de Lesseps, namely to cut a deep waterway across the isthmus, it was decided that locks would have to be built. The contracting companies did not complete their work and began to fail. The great task slowly but surely came to a halt; then a minor panic ensued.

In France alone there were some four hundred thousand shareholders to whom the success of the Panama Canal meant everything, and they were forced to realize, quite unexpectedly, that there was more than a chance that the canal might never even be completed. Only one thing could save the whole scheme from disaster, and that was the immediate raising of more money; but by then many of those who had been swept off their feet with enthusiasm were loath to see good money follow bad; many more had nothing left to contribute. In desperation it was decided to obtain permission to hold a lottery to provide funds. M. de Lesseps issued a circular to all shareholders, explaining the situation, and appealing for co-operation. Not until the eleventh hour, however, did the French Government pass the bill to allow the lottery—then it failed through lack of support.

Nothing but failure lay in view of De Lesseps and his colleagues. The great scheme upon which so many hundreds of people had pinned their faith lay on the brink of disaster. The concession granted to the company was in danger of expiring, work was at a standstill, and even the most optimistic were in despair. "In seven years it can be completed," De Lesseps had said; but that was in 1881, and the year 1888 had already arrived. In the great excavations so many miles across the sea, machinery lay rotting and rusting where ships should have been sailing. But still the indomitable engineer, De Lesseps, would not admit defeat. "The Panama Canal will be completed."

Then, on December 14, 1888, the tragic notice was posted in Paris to the effect that the Panama Canal Company had suspended payment. An emergency cabinet meeting was called to avert a crisis on the Bourse. De Lesseps and his colleagues resigned their posts, and three liquidators were appointed to take charge of the company's affairs. With no funds, and little more than expensive machinery and buildings as assets, the prospects

looked bleak enough; but with a concession, which meant life or death to the scheme, in acute danger of expiring, and with a good thirty miles of the canal as yet uncut, there did not seem much hope of saving anything from the wreckage.

To the credit of his countrymen, however, a vote of confidence was passed in favour of De Lesseps, even at such an hour of darkness; and at a great meeting of shareholders on December 27 it was resolved not to claim payment of coupons and annuities until the canal opened. It was decided that more money should be raised at once, so that work could be resumed immediately, and, miraculously, by the end of the year about nine thousand men were employed once more.

Meanwhile, in certain quarters of the city, rumour had been at work. Even while a representative, sent by the liquidators to Panama, was playing for an extension of the all-important concession, legal advisers to the government were deciding that certain of the company's affairs should be looked into without delay. Monsieur de Lesseps, who had been offered the chairmanship of the new company, formed to take over and save the assets of the old one, suddenly found himself under suspicion. The report of a commission which returned from Panama was to the effect that the canal might be completed for nineteen million four hundred thousand pounds more, but that thirty million pounds must be allowed for in all, taking into consideration any emergencies which might arise—as they had arisen before. This meant that, with fifty million pounds already spent, the total estimated cost of the canal was eighty million pounds. The original estimate of De Lesseps had been a total of twenty million pounds.

When this was realized, and when news came that the concession would be extended, provided that an immediate return to work was guaranteed, a renewed effort was made to establish the new company on sound lines; but the revelations were too much for the people. Of the fifty millions which had already been spent, it became known that only about two-thirds had actually been spent on constructive work; the remainder had been frittered away. The company's shares fell from their original five hundred francs to slightly over twenty-seven francs. Public indignation reached such a pitch, and feeling grew so bitter, that the public prosecutor determined to institute an official enquiry at once. And then the world was startled to learn that Ferdinand de Lesseps, his son, and three colleagues were threatened with arrest.

Few really believed that Ferdinand de Lesseps was guilty of any real crime. It was just that his ambitions had run away with him. He had promised too much, even though he had always held the utmost faith in those ambitions. The task had proved overwhelmingly big, and that, so far as its creator was concerned, was his only mistake. Now, instead of the triumphs which would have been his had it succeeded, he lay ill and aged at his country home, with the disgrace which failure had brought him. On February 9, 1889, the court pronounced judgment, and Ferdinand de Lesseps, holder of the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, innocent save that he dreamed extravagantly, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and fined three thousand francs.

On December 7, 1894, he died, and had it not been for provision made by grateful associates in the earlier Suez Canal scheme, his family would have been destitute. All he possessed, and all that his wife and children possessed, had been invested in Panama bonds. Spasmodically, and with little hope of success, the work went ahead at Panama. The years passed, and although nothing constructive was done, the Americans, always hostile to the French scheme, and always inclined to challenge the project with a "Nicaraguan Canal," saw an opportunity for turning the failure of the first ambitious scheme into success. On December 28, 1899—eighteen long years since that first ill-fated expedition began operations—a company was incorporated in New Jersey, with a capital of thirty million dollars. It was called the Panama Canal Company of America, and it acquired the French interests. With power to quadruple its capital if necessary, its aims were to enlarge, complete, and work the still unfinished canal.

Thousands had met ruin with the failure of the French scheme, and thousands had died along the banks of that mighty excavation. Overgrown with trees and the lush vegetation of the swamps, the cutting spoke only of failure and despair. Machinery lay rotting in the sodden ground; dredges, deserted and long unworked, jutted forlornly from the muddy water, old-fashioned and useless, tribute only to the millions of francs which had been spent so lavishly and unwisely. Now, with a capital of dollars instead of francs, fresh enthusiasm suddenly swept the field. "The Panama Canal will be completed."

First, profiting by the terrible lessons of recent years, elaborate preparations were made to remove the fever danger from that part of the country. With a concession extended for ten more years, the Americans set to work, and once more a glimmering of hope

was felt in far-off France, where so many shareholders still retained their little interests. But once again the funds were inadequate. In spite of all the good work done by the French, in spite of all the millions of tons of excavations already completed when the new company took over, work ceased once more. Again money was sought for, found and spent, and again it vanished into that tremendous cutting between the two oceans.

In 1893 came the Spanish-American war, and inevitable delay. With the United States at peace again, the demand for completion on the canal was renewed, but once again there was internal disagreement as to the plan which should be carried out. All along, ever since the French had first started negotiations, the Americans had talked of a competitive project—the Nicaraguan route, and now it seemed that this might well be proceeded with. If so, all was lost to the shareholders in France, because all the years of labour that had gone into their canal would be ignored. If, on the other hand, the French sold all their interests to the United States there was still a chance of recouping part of the lost millions; but the Americans were in a strong position. Sooner than lose everything, the French were bound to accept a figure ridiculously below that which they expected to get.

A canal had to be built, that was the only certain thing about all the discussion and bargaining, but it had to be decided where, and by whom. As things were, a ship was forced to sail a full nine thousand miles out of its way to get from one ocean to the other. Finally, in 1902, President Roosevelt decided that the canal should be built by the United States—and that the old Panama route should be used.

Even then, however, the problem of Panama was not solved, for revolutions flared and died, a republic was formed and caused still more trouble over negotiations for territory. More delay, only to be followed by more controversy. Was the canal to be a sea-level waterway, or was it to be worked with locks? At last, after more wasted years, the lock idea was decided upon. Once again was the seemingly never-ending task begun.

With the passing of the years the age of machinery had progressed. Now, to the scene of so much weary and fruitless labour came all the bustle of the early nineteen hundreds—concrete mixers, steel, dynamite and mighty shovels. Again the land around that amazing cutting came to life, teeming with workers, and echoing to the noise of busy machinery. By 1905 it had stopped again; this time it was a further outbreak of fever.



But nothing could stem the building of the Panama Canal, even though it seemed that it never could be completed. More years slipped by . . . 1910 . . . 1911 . . . 1912. Steadily pushing onwards, meeting obstacles of every kind, passing them by, the workers toiled obstinately at their task; and in the end it was finished. On August 15, 1914, it was opened to commercial traffic.

After nearly thirty-four years of uncertainty, ruin, death, and disillusionment for thousands, the waters of the two oceans met. Success was built out of failure. Though hundreds of those ambitious followers of De Lesseps never lived to see the outcome of the scheme—and though few who know it to be accomplished may actually set eyes upon it—it is good to know that, after all, the great De Lesseps spoke the truth when he said: "The Panama Canal will be completed."

# ROUND THE WORLD FOR A WAGER

*By*

T. C. BRIDGES and H. TILTMAN

**"I** WAGER you a thousand pounds to a fiver you're not game to work your passage round the world—taking, say, five years to do it, working for your living as you go."

The speaker was a splendid-looking old man with a great mane of white hair, a white beard, and fierce, bushy eyebrows, while the youngster whom he addressed was a tall, slim, overgrown boy, whose pale face told a tale of late hours and shaky nerves. There was a taunt in the words, a taunt which seemed almost cruel, yet which was quite deliberate, for Mr. Jonathan Holders knew his man and was fighting for his very soul. The taunt did the trick.

"Done!" cried the boy, and that is how "Greenhorn"—as he prefers to be known—started on his strange series of adventures.

Greenhorn was one of those thousands of boys who left school to be thrown into the mire and misery of the Great War. He got his commission at seventeen, and went at once to France and the front-line trenches. He then transferred to the flying corps, and a couple of crashes nearly finished him. Yet, with the aid of whisky he carried on. As he says himself, "I found that when human endurance comes to an end whisky can give an inhuman power to carry on."

Then came the Armistice and return to London. Untrained for any job, what could he do? In point of fact, he did most things, from posing as artist's model to acting as butler in a big house. But no job lasted long, and he was almost down and out when Mr. Holders, an old family friend, came to the rescue with the proposal already quoted.

Greenhorn's remaining capital was seventeen pounds, and after many vain efforts to get a job which would carry him across the Atlantic he was forced to spend thirteen pounds on a steerage passage to New York. He lived a week of such filth and squalor as he had never known, even in the trenches, and started to scour New York for a job. The only one he found was of newspaper canvasser paid on a commission basis. It was summer, a fierce sun baked the city. He wore out his shoes and nearly died of heat,

then by a special mercy heard of work in a Maine lumber camp and went.

From a log hut emerged the burly foreman, and stood, hands on hips, staring. Then his face crinkled, and he began to laugh. He roared, he bellowed, till the tears ran down his cheeks, and the unlucky Greenhorn stood feeling and looking like a fool. To the boss this tall, slim youth, in his town clothes, was simply a figure of fun.

"Say, you are sure going to one swell party!" gasped the foreman at last, and when Greenhorn assured him he had come to work he dissolved again into shouts of mirth. Yet he was not at heart ill-natured, for he provided the newcomer with an outfit suited to his job, and even offered him a chew of tobacco.

"No—thanks very much," said the youngster, "I haven't started that yet."

"You'd better start it soon then, son, if you want to make a man of yourself," retorted the foreman, and handed him over to the "crumb-boss," a terribly crippled man, whose task it was to keep the hut and bunks free of undesirable insects, which, by the way, was a quite impossible task. The lumber-jacks were of every race—Turks, Poles, Russians, Greeks, Swiss, and half-breeds. Their first amusement was to strip the newcomer and make him do a song and dance. He crept at last to his bunk, sick and shaken.

Next day to work. Work with a great double-bitted axe, a tool he had never used before. By midday every muscle shrieked for rest, and every sinew was strained beyond endurance. He stuck it, and by the end of six months in camp was as fit as any of them and had gained two stone in weight. It made a man of him, yet it was a beastly experience. Every Saturday and Sunday most of the men got roaring drunk and fought like beasts. There was no mercy for one who fell, for the other would trample on his face with his spiked boots. The cold, too, was terrible, the temperature running far below zero, and once Greenhorn got his face frozen and had to spend five days of agony before he recovered.

One day in spring he walked into the foreman's hut and told him he was leaving.

"Well, Bill," said the other, "I can hardly believe you've stuck it. It's made a man of you, and if you ever want a job there's one for you so long as I'm foreman."

Bill—let us call him Bill rather than Greenhorn, for by this time he was no longer green—went south to look for a job in new oil-fields, and got one fifteen minutes after he had left the train.

Ten days on foul food and fouler water were enough. He cleared out, and got work on a Missouri ranch, where his first experience was to be put on top of a bucking mule. The brute nearly stood on its head, then reared on its hind legs, leaped into the air, and came down with a vicious sideways twist. Its next effort was to try to get its rider's leg between its teeth, and, finally, with a combined buck, kick, and twist, flung him on his head.

It was not until afterward that he discovered that one of the cowboys had inserted a dozen large, prickly burrs between the saddle-cloth and the mule's back. But he got his own back when a tractor arrived and he was the only man in the place who could drive it.

When this job ran out Bill thought he would try harvesting. Having spent most of his money, he tried stealing a ride on a freight train, and, curling himself on some straw, fell asleep. He was wakened by a savage kick and scrambled up to see his bag being hurled over the side of the car by a huge brakeman.

"Get off this train or I'll break your something neck," bawled the brute, and although the train was travelling pretty fast Bill was forced to jump. By a miracle he landed without anything worse than bruises. Later he learned where he had blundered. He should have offered a bribe, and would then have been allowed to remain where he was.

He got a job stooking oats and barley, and, though he thought himself hard, found that this work required a brand-new set of muscles, and the first ten days were almost as bad as the first week in the lumber camp. Barring a very close call from being bitten by a big rattlesnake which was hidden in the stubble, he had no special adventures, and for the rest of the season he followed the harvest northward, until autumn found him over the border in Canada.

Calgary is not a bad place in summer, but it is distinctly cold in winter, and jobs are not plentiful at that season of the year. Bill tried for work as night watchman, but the city fathers turned him down, and he was at his wit's and money's end when a kindly constable suggested that he might enlist in the North-west Mounted Police.

Ragged and almost penniless, he was yet kindly received, and when he was able to prove that he had served in the infantry and the flying corps in the war he was taken as a recruit in the most famous police force not merely in the British Empire, but in the world.

The motto of the force is "Get your man," and a Mountie never fails to do so. If a Mountie sent after a criminal came back and said, "I couldn't get him," he would simply be dismissed the force—the greatest disgrace in the world. If he is killed in the chase another takes his place. One night when Bill was in the guard-room a prisoner was brought in. Eighteen months earlier this man had shot and robbed a rancher and got away. A Mountie sent after him was shot, and the criminal escaped to Labrador, where, disguised by a beard and a limp, he lived, as he thought, in safety.

The wounded policeman got well and followed. He turned up in the village, and the killer fled. The Mountie followed. At the end of a seven weeks' chase across terrible country the fugitive turned and dropped his gun.

"For God's sake take me," he cried wildly. "My hair's white, and I can't sleep. If I shoot you another Mountie will come after me, and another, and another; there's no getting away from you."

Here is another story, even more amazing, illustrating the tenacity of the force. A murder occurred in an Eskimo village north of the Arctic Circle. It was nearly a year before news reached the police, and a sergeant was sent to arrest the man. He travelled thousands of miles across a snow-clad wilderness, from one village to another, learning the language as he travelled. In each village he started a school, told the people of the white man's law, and established a native constable. At last he learned where the murderers lived, but he learned too that the murdered men were two brutal prospectors who had merited their fate, and who had been killed in a fight which they themselves had started.

Three years from his first setting out the sergeant returned with his prisoners, who were sent to school and taught English, so that they could understand their trial. They were then tried, found guilty, sentenced, but their sentences were at once quashed; they were pardoned, and sent back to their own village, where they were made special constables. The sergeant was made an inspector, and received the police medal, the highest honour the force can confer.

A friend of Bill's, Constable Little, was sent after a man who had gone mad and run amok. Little trailed him for days into the Arctic, and came up with him raving and running stark naked. Then came the trip back, night after night alone in the snow with a madman. One night the fellow got loose and attacked Little, half killing him. Blinded with blood, Little went in chase again.

and got his man, only to find him so ill with exposure that it was days before he could travel again. The return journey took three months, and the ghastly part of it was that Little was going mad himself. Lack of sleep and long association with this howling maniac was affecting his brain.

Bill's own chief adventure was a raid on a Vancouver opium den, to pick up a wanted murderer. Six men went, armed with revolvers and ball cartridge. Led by a secret service agent, they crept in single file along a low-roofed stone passage, and reached a wooden grille, at which they knocked. An ugly yellow face showed through a trap, then they smashed through, and faced as evil-looking a mob as any film fan could desire to set eyes on.

For a moment silence, then the sizzling hiss of flung steel, and Ted, one of Bill's best friends in the force, sank down with a keen-pointed knife deep in his throat. The murderer came flashing past, clearing the body with a bound, but before he could gain the door the secret service man had laid him out with a smashing blow from a length of lead pipe.

Bill liked his life in the police, but he began to think of his wager, and it seemed time to move on if he wished to win it. A beautiful three-masted schooner was in the harbour bound for the South Seas, and he went aboard and told the skipper he should like to sail with him. The skipper's eyes roamed over the scarlet tunic, elegant riding breeches, and polished boots.

"Don't you do it, my boy," he said. "It's a dog's life." Bill did not believe him, though afterwards he wished he had. He bought himself out of the police and went aboard.

"Going from one job to another," says Bill, "is just like a perpetual moving from prep. school to public school. You have just achieved some sort of position when you are suddenly cast in with a new set of companions among whom you are the smallest of small fry. The other men make it as hard as they can for you, but if you stick it, grin and bear it, they usually turn decent in the end."

The schooner was the hardest school that Bill had yet discovered. He was cooped up in a space thirteen feet long by six wide with a tough lot of brutes, and, though the captain was decent, the mate was a "bucko" of the hard old type, whose orders were accompanied by kicks and blows. To make matters worse the whole of the first fortnight was one of bitterly cold northerly gales. The food was horrible, and what between starvation and sea-sickness Bill grew very weak. He could not stomach the salt pork and hash which were the only food, and, to make matters worse, his hands,

from pulling on water-soaked ropes, became a mass of festering sores. Two hours of every watch had to be spent in pumping the ship dry.

One day, unable to go aloft, he was savagely attacked by the mate, who knocked him senseless, and would probably have killed him if the captain had not interfered and sent Bill below, where he got six hours' sleep.

That was the turning-point. He found his appetite, and grew fit again. As they drew south it became very hot, and the ship was becalmed. Water was rationed down to a tumblerful apiece each day, so there was no longer any washing. The mate was still Bill's enemy. It was rope's end or toe of his boot at every hour of the day. Eventually Bill inserted in the seat of his trousers a flat piece of wood, which he found a very present help in time of trouble.

We could write this whole chapter on Bill's adventures during this ghastly voyage, but must be content with one incident.

A man known as "Swede" bought a bottle of gin from the captain, and got very drunk. When drunk this man was a dangerous lunatic. Annoyed with Bill because he refused a drink of this poisonous spirit, Swede whipped out a knife and chased him. Bill raced up the fore rigging, but the maniac came after him with the knife between his teeth. Drunk as he was, he climbed the faster of the two. Bill slid down, raced across the deck, and ran up the main-mast rigging, where he clung, ninety feet above the deck. "Swede" followed, but half-way up stopped. His brain was so addled he had forgotten what he was after, and, to Bill's intense relief, the man climbed slowly down and went back to his interrupted carouse. Next day he had not the slightest recollection of what had happened.

After eighty days at sea the schooner at last beat into Suva, in the Fiji Islands, and Bill hurried ashore to present a letter of introduction to a doctor, a friend of Mr. Holders. The doctor gazed at Bill, who, as he says himself, looked like a very bedraggled crow. But when he realized who Bill was he hurried him into his bath-room, and laid out clean white ducks. Three months' solid dirt was removed, and after a shave and hair-cut a complete stranger appeared to enjoy the doctor's excellent lunch.

The doctor helped Bill to find a job with a planter, and he started across the island. It was a pleasant journey, and the natives were pleasant people. So was their food. Prawns cooked with a pale pink coco-nut sauce formed Bill's favourite dish. The man Bill worked for was called Macdonald, and he had a gold-mine

Koli, a huge, laughing native, was boss of the gang who worked it, and Bill acted as foreman. The natives were a lazy crowd, and, knowing that their new boss was raw to the game, did so little work that in the end Bill grew annoyed and cuffed one of them. There was a nasty look in the man's eyes as he got up, but he went on with his work. Presently to Bill's amazement he saw the faithful Koli leading the boys away. The whole lot had downed tools and quit. All Bill could do was to go and tell Macdonald what had happened.

It was not until later that Bill got the truth. The boy whom he had struck had simply been waiting his chance to get behind his white boss and drive a pick into his skull. Koli knew this, and managed the strike in order to save a murder.

Bill's next stage was a voyage to Australia on a liner as sailor's "Peggy." In other words, he was steward to the fo'c'sle, and not a bad job at that. After serving breakfast and making up the bunks he had nothing to do for the rest of the day but serve two meals and wash-up dishes. He got a pound a week and his keep. He lived well, and the sailors were decent to him.

Nine days brought the ship to Sydney, where Bill landed light-heartedly, and set to search for a job. The town was rotten with strikes, there was no money about, and there had been a bad drought. Briefly, there was no work to be had, and as he tramped the streets in pouring rain his spirits sank to zero. At last he was driven to a dreadful doss-house kept by a horrible half-caste. One side of the man's body had been blasted by lightening, the whole left side of his face was one hideous scar, his left leg was withered, his left arm ended in a steel hook. Twopence a night was the charge for a filthy bunk with a wooden pillow.

Even then Bill had not reached the bottom, for even the twopences failed, and he was forced to spend the nights on a bench in the park. He met there an old "sundowner" (tramp) who was extraordinarily kind, and shared with him a crust of bread and a wad of newspapers which they used as blankets to keep out the cold. It can be bitterly cold in Sydney on a winter night.

Desperate, Bill determined to break a shop-window and find refuge in prison. Anything was better than freezing and starving in the park. But a policeman forestalled him, and instead of running him in offered him a half-crown. The kindness of the man brought the tears to Bill's eyes.

"No," he muttered, "I can't take it, but—but thank you a thousand times." He was turning away when the kindly policeman



stopped him, and told of a hostel where ex-soldiers could get blankets and a free meal. Bill went, the people were indescribably kind, and the luxury of warmth and food were equally beyond description.

Then quite suddenly his luck changed. By the purest accident he ran into the Stantons, old friends whom he had previously met in Fiji. Within twenty-four hours he had a job on a sheep-station in South Australia, and after two happy days with his friends found himself on his way across the continent.

The station was pleasantly situated on a lake, the foreman was a good fellow, and though Bill started at the bottom, he soon learned the business of cutting box-thorn and trapping rabbits, and how to kill, clean, and skin sheep. He worked hard for six months; then Mr. Stanton arrived, and, knowing all about Bill's wager, told him he had done well, but was welcome to move on if he wished to do so. He went back to Sydney with the Stantons, and a few days later was on a boat bound for New Guinea, where he had found a job as overseer of a copra (coco-nut) plantation.

New Guinea struck him as a savage, sinister country, and the life proved as ugly as the island itself. The boys were absolute savages, and his wretched bungalow swarmed with evil insects, especially centipedes. The New Guinea centipede is a horror, so poisonous that its sting nearly drives a man mad with pain. One morning when Bill put on his shirt he felt something inside it crawling on his skin. He tore the shirt off, but could still feel the ghastly thing crawling on his back. His boy dashed in at his call, and with one flick of a towel knocked the creature off, then killed it. To add to his troubles, Bill's boss, "Monkey" Milson, was almost as objectionable as the centipedes themselves, and in the end this man drove him to give up his job. Bill was leaving, and some of the boys were carrying his stuff down to the beach when Milson rode up, and with much evil language ordered them to drop Bill's goods and go back to their work. At that Bill really lost his temper. He caught Milson's horse by the bridle.

"If those boys drop my goods," he said, "I'll pull you out of your saddle and thrash you with your own whip." Milson was scared, and so they stood till the boys had passed on. Then Bill gave Milson's horse a slap on his hindquarters, and when last Bill saw Milson he was clinging with both arms round the neck of a galloping, snorting horse.

Bill was able to pay his own passage back to Sydney and have a few days' holiday there before making his next move. This was

to South Africa as steward on a liner. Once more he started at the bottom of the ladder. Being green, he was given the table farthest from the serving-counter. Then he found that, while other stewards could carry a dozen filled plates at a time, he could manage only two. And he had nearly a score of hungry people to feed. He had to explain his plight to his passengers, and they were very sporting about it. Some agreed to go without soup so that he could get on with the meat course.

The second day he was in luck. There were sausages and mashed, and he found he could carry quite a lot by filling his pockets with sausages and jamming the plates of mashed potatoes one on top of the other. Behind his serving-screen he unglued the plates, yanked the sausages out of his pockets and put them in position, and was congratulated by his table on the improved speed of his service.

The work was very hard. Up at half-past five to scrub the whole vast saloon, the passages, and alley-ways, next lay tables, serve and clear away breakfast; then the stewards snatched a mouthful of food, and afterward had to clean plate and cutlery until it was time to lay midday dinner. After their own dinner came afternoon tea, supper, and a last snack for the passengers, so that it was usually midnight before the unfortunate and leg-weary steward could seek his bed.

They were terribly short-handed, and one result was breakages on an appalling scale. Our traveller says that you could find your way from Tilbury to Sydney on the bottom of the ocean by the trail of crockery and cutlery hurled overboard by disgruntled stewards.

Bill reached Durban, and tried for a job, but there was nothing doing. In the end he was obliged to sign on as steward on a ship going all the way back to Australia. What Bill had not realized was that this was an emigrant ship, and his job was not only to serve a tableful of emigrants, but to look after eight of their cabins down in the hold.

It had been fine all the way out from England; now it began to blow, and the state of things down below was too dreadful for words. That was not all of it. The women would constantly quarrel, and the most appalling fights followed. No one dared interfere. When one unfortunate steward did so both the ladies turned on him and nearly tore him limb from limb. The way they ate was amazing. As soon as one meal was over they would begin to queue up for the next, and when the bell rang there was a sava-

rush which swept away stewards and anyone in their road. One would grab a slab of butter and lick it all over to make it his own. Another would snatch up the jam and shovel it with his fingers into his mouth. As the stewards went by they would snatch the plates of food from their hands, and Bill armed himself with a big iron soup-ladle, and let them have it properly as they tried to way-lay him.

Some were brutal to the stewards. One young yokel used an unpardonable word to Bill, who went off, fetched two pairs of boxing-gloves, and told the fellow to come down to the fo'c'sle. The man had pluck and was twice as strong as Bill, but Bill could box a bit. The yokel, to his credit, fought clean, and when at last he was knocked out he held out his hand and said :

"Ah'm sorry I called ee that, laad. It's a baad word, and Ah'll use it no more." They shook hands, and next morning Bill saw that his late adversary had the biggest plate of porridge he could eat.

Arrived back at Sydney, Bill realized with a sudden shock that he was left with something less than a week to get fixed up with a boat if he wanted to reach England in time to win his wager. Luck was with him, and he got a post as steward on a liner sailing for England the following Wednesday. This trip began badly, for the second steward took a dislike to the "toff," as he named Bill, and proceeded to make things hot for him. But Bill had learned a thing or two during his wanderings, and managed, quite accidentally of course, to upset a bucket of hot water over the bully's feet and ankles. The man danced and yelled as he tore off his shoes, but Bill said nothing. He was had up before the chief steward, and degraded to the plate-house for the rest of the voyage. This meant that he would get no "dropsy" (that is, tips), but for this Bill cared not a jot.

The new job suited him down to the ground. He was out of the way of the bullying steward, had plenty of fun and plenty of food. He became excellent friends with the cook and the baker, and kept fit by sparring practice every afternoon with other stewards.

On a lovely summer morning the white cliffs of England showed up, and after five years, less one day, Bill returned to his own country to meet Mr. Holders.

"Well, boy, you've won your wager, and it's made a man of you."

This was true. Greenhorn had graduated in the world's finest university, and has now settled down to a life of busy work.

# THE SINKING OF THE "TAHITI"

By

H. MACQUARRIE

WE left Wellington on the R.M.S. *Tahiti* bound for San Francisco, via Raratonga and Papeete, at three o'clock on Tuesday, August 12, 1930. At about four-thirty on the following Sunday afternoon (local time) the *Tahiti* stood bolt upright on her sinking stern, and slipped to the bottom of the sea. We had withdrawn before this happened. Emily had not!

It has occurred to me since that the *Tahiti* offered warning. At the time I saw dignity in the incident—the beautiful vessel slowly freeing herself from the steel cables which bound her to the Wellington dock, the whir of machinery heard faintly, the occasional shout from the bridge, and the clouds of escaping black smoke curling from a glowing red and black funnel—a normal enough proceeding admittedly, merely portentous on this occasion by the saxophone at the lips of a third-class passenger hidden in the bows!

I believe now that had we been able to read correctly that mournful wailing, broken by an occasional hiccough-like sob when the saxophone player took breath, we should have given the engineers a tip about their starboard propeller-shaft and gone back to Wellington with the pilot. It really looks now as if the *Tahiti* was bidding good-bye to the land, a final good-bye.

We crossed the 180th meridian on Wednesday, August 13, and were therefore given an extra thirteenth—two thirteenths in one week, which some people thought ominous, later!

However, we managed to pass the unlucky numbers safely. The weather had been slightly unpleasant off the New Zealand coast, but the steep, breaking seas had gradually calmed to a big lazy roll, not the ordinary ocean swell so much, as a succession of big waves which lazily divided near their crests without breaking into spume—the kind of sea of which one might say: "There has been wind here, or there will be wind!"

On the night of the fourteenth Dick and I went to the small bar on the deck above ours for a pot of ale. When Dick signed the card, he recalled our firm intention to pay cash for everything on this trip, to avoid a surprising bill at San Francisco. We had

almost decided to ask the steward for our past cards, to pay them off that night; but it meant a trip to the cabin for more cash, and so we decided to let the matter rest until the next morning. The incident is unimportant, yet it remains fixed in my mind; possibly my Scots blood is exulting; more probably it is interesting as the only occasion I know of when procrastination proved the thief of hard cash—our past cards were never redeemed!

At 2 a.m. the next morning the *Tahiti* was steaming along at a good speed over the still broken swell—an efficiently run liner with an extremely complex organization. At 4 a.m. she gave an ominous shudder; the engines stopped, and the vessel lost way. Followed a pause of some anxiety for the officer on the bridge. A few seconds later a greaser from the engine-room tore hastily up the bridge companion-way.

"The second engineer's compliments, sir," said he: "the b-y tail-shaft's broken, and the old b-d's sinkin'!"

Dick had felt the shudder, but I knew nothing until Walker, our bedroom steward, switched on the lights in our cabin and said quietly: "Captain's orders, sir, and will you dress and go on deck. There's been trouble in the engine-room—no need to worry."

"What is it, Walker?" I asked, sitting up in my berth; "trouble in the engine-room! Why should that make us dress, and——" I had slipped to the deck.

Dick in the lower berth was yawning and rubbing his eyes.

"We don't quite know. Tail-shaft has broken, sir. But you should dress, in case——" Walker had gone.

I knew perfectly well that a captain will never muster passengers on deck before dawn without excellent reasons, but Walker's method of conveying the order had been so reassuring that I felt fairly safe in dressing partially and hurrying to the boat deck to get more information.

The ship had stopped, of course, but the boat deck seemed much as usual in the dim light. No other passengers were on deck. I was beginning to suspect a false alarm when bright lights began flickering from the wireless room: "Dot—dot—dot! Dash—dash—dash! Dot—dot—dot!" The *Tahiti* was screaming for help; she was sending out an SOS.

Within a few seconds I was back in our cabin urging Dick, who was still slowly dressing, to hurry. I said as calmly as possible, although I was conscious of slight hoarseness: "Perhaps you had better hurry. The engine-room is filling. The engineers

and firemen are shoulder-high in water. It looks like the boats, and we're nearly five hundred miles from land."

And as I spoke, I could still see that engine-room—the two lengths of cylinder heads—the gratings and iron ladders, and below, men struggling about in dank water rushing from side to side as the vessel rolled. I could hear that awful, sombre sound water makes in a dead ship.

"It looks like the boats!" I repeated.

"What fun!" said Dick; "we shall land on a desert island!"

"There aren't any about, unfortunately," I said.

"The lights look a bit queer," remarked Dick casually.

Our cabin lights were definitely fading. Occasionally they flickered.

"The water is reaching the dynamos," I said, stuffing my overcoat pockets with as many tins of tobacco as possible.

"Passports and letters of credit!" said Dick, delving in a suitcase.

The lights gave a brilliant flicker and went out finally. The porthole became a lemony moon. We struck matches for a final glance around the cabin, and then hurried up the grand companion to the boat deck where most of the passengers were now gathered.

The question: "What has happened?" was often asked; but the answer, "The tail-shaft has carried away!" conveyed very little.

Ignorance of the sea was fortunately rampant—what the sea in destructive mood can do with the largest and most efficient piece of human mechanism out of control.

"The ship is anchored, of course!" I heard one man say. Anchored! In water three miles deep, five hundred miles from land.

One elderly American lady of slightly exuberant temperament sat very comfortably on a mental position which evidently seemed quite logical to her. "If the ship's in trouble, she should make instantly for a port!" she suggested.

"Her machinery's broken down; she can't move," a man explained.

"Then another ship must come instantly and take us off this one!" said she decisively, taking a deck-chair and placing her handbag on her knee. She might have been pausing on a jetty, waiting for an approaching ferry.

A definite light was now growing stronger in the east. The day was dawning. What, I wondered, had this day to offer us?

"Coffee in the dining-saloon!" announced the deck steward.

We looked at him closely. Did this mean the boats? Were they going to give us good, strong coffee to strengthen us for the ordeal? Denis was smiling cheerfully, too cheerfully: we were not going to a parish tea!

In the dining-saloon all the stewards were ready to welcome us with beaming faces. Like Denis, they might have been parish workers helping at a meat tea.

There was plenty of food on the tables—biscuits, cakes, bread and butter, and a profusion of fruit. I noticed a taste of salt water in the coffee, but said nothing. "Nice rich milk, this morning!" said Bishop Bennett, pouring a thick creamy fluid into his coffee; but neither he nor any of the others saw anything to alarm them in the rich milk. Evidently they did not know that a ship with weeks of life before her offers her passengers thin white-wash. The creamy milk was a sinister sign.

I felt little inclination to eat. It occurred to me to wonder whether a condemned criminal might escape if he refused the rich breakfast of the last morning. Probably not; and so I struggled with some bread and butter and put an apple in my pocket.

Dick managed to get one news item. He was told that the cargo vessel, *Penybryn*, was not many miles distant. Every radio in the Pacific was shrieking to her to turn back. She had not replied. It was hoped that she had heard and was unable to reply; but it was very unlikely that she would know of our need until eight o'clock that evening when her daily wireless watch began. It was trying to think of her chugging along on her course, widening the distance between us at every turn of her propeller. Other ships were rushing to our aid, but none of them could reach us within two days.

Gradually, as the time passed, the group which had remained partially complete near the vestibule doors, broke up. Nervously at first, but soon with gathering confidence, people began walking about the deck.

Another glance down the engine-room skylight showed us the plates quite free of water. There was an ominous bubbling and hissing at the base of the steel bulkhead between the engine-room and the after-holds, but the situation seemed completely under control.

All danger had obviously passed, we decided, and quite gaily we ran down the grand companion to our cabin. We were the only passengers on the cheapest saloon deck, three flights down

from the boat deck. Our nearest neighbour was the printer who had a small cubby-hole amidships. The stewards' "glory 'ole" was immediately aft of us. It was an intimate, neighbourly kind of deck.

We even dared to bath, but now with exquisite organization. Fully dressed, even with overcoats, and carrying a life-belt in one hand and a towel in the other, we nipped into the bathroom and undressed like fire-brigade men, each item placed so that it could be donned quickly, or gathered into a bundle for a run. The process was quite exciting, but there was no luxurious lingering under a warm shower.

Back in our cabin, greatly comforted because Walker had made our beds, we had finished shaving when we heard some commotion outside our door. Evidently trunks were being moved. We heard Walker talking and the voices of women. Looking out, I saw our steward shepherding a couple of women into the cabin opposite. He came into our room and shut the door.

"Second-class passengers," he explained; "water had got into their cabin, and——"

"Really! From the engine-room, of course?"

"No, not from the engine-room——" Walker hesitated.

"Then——?" I recalled the salt water in the coffee.

"I don't know, sir—but breakfast will be served soon." He smiled (the parish worker smile) and added carelessly, "You'd better bring your life-belts with you; I believe they won't let passengers into the saloon without them. Just a precaution——!"

There we were again: back from safety to danger! Water in the second class, and not from the engine-room! The second-class cabins were on the same deck as ours, some distance aft, probably aft of the engine-room.

We had not forgotten our little car Emily. After breakfast, when there seemed every chance of the ship remaining afloat for some hours, I slipped down through the now deserted steerage to the iron door leading to the hold where she was stowed.

Her paintwork and nickel were gleaming; her badges were shining in the dim light. In fact, she still smelt of polish, and the soft cloth I had used the day before hung over the windscreen. Automatically I took the cloth and began rubbing gently.

Ridiculous, I know. But that little car meant much to me. She had often shared great danger with Dick and me before; she was associated in my mind with some of the happiest moments of my life. Her strength and ability to "keep going" had more than once saved our lives.



And now her wheels were securely bound in the hold of a sinking liner. How I hoped, just then, that the *Tahiti* might be safely towed into some port.

On deck once more, I found many of the passengers trying to carry on as usual. Some of the men were definitely pale, but lips were often smiling and uttering cheery remarks even when eyes were dull and expressionless. Occasionally there were slightly revealing verbal lapses.

They had not yet managed to raise the *Penybryn*; she, our best hope of rescue, was still chugging away from us. The *Tofua*, then in the region of Samoa, was making for us at full speed. There was talk of the *Ma'ura*, due that day at Papeete. But unless the *Penybryn* should hear of us, there seemed no hope of rescue until Monday; and it was still Friday!

With the engine-room dry and now a hive of reconstructive industry, I could not, for the life of me, understand why the ship's people kept us ready for the life-boats; why each boat was being stored so carefully with blankets; and why (very alarming) the chief steward had placed his charming little canary in his life-boat. Not that it made any difference to the canary; he sang as well in the life-boat as he had been singing in the lounge vestibule throughout the voyage.

But some of us were soon to know the worst.

Dick and I were standing at the after-end of the boat deck, watching some sailors removing the hatches from the hold below us. A good deal of interest was shown by the ship's people when the work was completed. We joined them, and looked down into the hold.

All was now clear. The *Tahiti's* position on the ocean surface was extremely "tentative." The hold was two-thirds full of water. The *Tahiti* was like a cat with a broken back, crawling along on its forepaws to an inevitable end. Glancing at the south-western horizon from whence the big roll was coming, I saw that it was clear. Only while it remained clear could we count on comparative safety.

Floating on the water in the cargoless hold, was an awkward assortment of timber, large beams and broken-up wood. Whenever the vessel rolled, this unwieldy mass rushed across and landed a hammering smash against the ship's side, threatening to burst her plates. Guided by the bos'n, the sailors made every effort to fish out the larger beams. They had little success, and the crashing went on.

"But she should be all right for a long time," I said hopefully to one of the junior officers. "There's a strong bulkhead between these after-holds, all full of water, I presume?" He nodded. "And the rest of the ship beginning at the engine-room."

"The strain on the bulkhead is very great," he whispered; "there's an awful lot of water leaning against it which has the effect of a hammer when the vessel moves. It might collapse at any minute, and then——! All the pumps are needed to keep the engine-room dry," he added; "we're going to try to bale out this hold to relieve the strain. Perhaps you had better not wait here," he went on kindly; "other passengers may come and we don't want——!"

We returned dutifully to the boat deck above, but the after railing exerted irresistible fascination. Fortunately for our peace of mind, we could not quite see into the hold. We watched the big derricks being moved into position—an awkward task on a rolling ship; and we seldom left the railing until the winches were working two great buckets which began dropping into the hold and bringing forth gallons of foul-looking water. Two or three men appeared with ordinary hand pails, dropping them into the hold at the end of lines. This little touch of the seaside was soon abandoned.

Indeed the main baling operations were a trifle pathetic, although a passenger offered a comforting explanation which we accepted gladly.

"That water came through from the engine-room at the first rush," he said. "True, there is danger of the bulkhead breaking—the whole weight of the ship is on it when the bow is up on a wave; but it is actually now only a matter of getting the water baled out of that hold. Then we should be perfectly all right."

We therefore learnt to believe that safety depended on the success of the baling, and there seemed no reason why, given time, the water should not be discharged like ordinary cargo.

The man was quite wrong, as a matter of fact. The water in the hold came, and was coming, from the smashed plates probably in the region of the stern tube, but this we did not know.

We watched for some hours, making signs to the men working the winches and derricks. They invariably signalled a happy affirmative when we made signals and gestures, asking if the water was going down. Our greatest feeling of relief came when we could no longer hear the ominous thuds against the vessel's side plates.

"Getting the water down all right," we told each other; "there's not even enough to float that timber." Thus we climbed back to safety, being ignorant of the fact that they were not getting the water down, that it was gaining on them. The timber floated less dangerously on the deck above; the worst of it was jammed under that deck.

Presumably most people understand the bulkhead arrangements on a ship. Actually, a modern vessel is sub-divided into sections by steel partitions. Stout doors, which may be closed from the upper decks during an emergency, permit communication under normal conditions. The *Tahiti* must now be imagined as one quarter full of water, kept in that quarter by the steel partition between the after-end of the engine-room and the two after-holds. The ship's bulkheads were in good enough condition, but they were never designed to resist the mighty force of water indefinitely. The weight they were resisting was never constant; the immense mass of water in the two empty holds literally hammered this bulkhead as the vessel rose and fell in the heavy swell. Our comfort, even our lives, depended on this engine-room bulkhead which, alas, showed signs of weakening from the beginning—water hissing between the plates, and great bulges developing.

The ship's stewards were responsible for the baling. A simple enough business alongside a dock, it was now both arduous and dangerous while the vessel rolled; and they were not used to such work. Stewards in *déshabillé* invariably look a trifle pale, but after a few hours' baling some of the *Tahiti* men appeared in a consumptive decline. They spent their rest hours on the boat deck, passengers being delighted to see them reclining on the once sacred deck-chairs. I saw one thin, delicate-looking lad stretched on a deck-chair in what seemed a state of collapse. His face was pallid, and mauve shadows had gathered beneath his closed eyes. I heard him murmur in a sweet, petulant kind of voice to a passing mate, "No tea and toast, thank you, steward; and don't worry to call me when the ship goes down. I shall have passed away in my sleep!" Which was startling until I saw a slight drooping at the corners of his mouth when the mate's reply, a hearty volley of abuse, reached him. The mate only permitted himself to laugh when he had got round a deck-house.

As the afternoon passed, we became more reassured. The day was so beautiful, just pleasantly warm, and the south-western sky—the danger-point for us—remained perfectly clear. I tried to

sleep in a deck-chair, and I might have enjoyed forty winks if I had not been so interested in a steward marching along the lines of life-boats with a great bread-basket under his arm. Into each boat he threw half a dozen sanitary rolls!

The ship had been organized as a section of civilized society before the accident; now an equally efficient organization kept her something between a kindly prison and an aristocratic lunatic asylum. Passengers were never allowed out of sight, and what amounted to sentries were posted, not too obviously, on the landings of the grand companion.

Towards the late afternoon another alliance was arranged: the third-class passengers were brought up to us, and I met "the three good souls." The three good souls were three middle-aged women, each with a small family of half-grown boys and girls. They instantly established headquarters on a sofa immediately within the promenade deck doors. From this sofa they seldom moved. Although their bodies seemed stiff and inert, their eyes were very much alive with something combining a little personal alarm with a world of anxiety for their children. One of these women had faded red hair, very obviously the mother of a boy of perhaps fourteen whose head might have done for a port light. For him she was most anxious. She was a big woman, I suspect from the Highlands, and this made the care her two small red-headed daughters showed for her, very pathetic and altogether charming.

We became very friendly, and it was a great relief to offer them a few words of comfort whenever I passed. They were quickly responsive when I tried to assure them that a broken tail-shaft was nothing very much in the day's run of a vessel.

At five-thirty a gong was beaten for our evening meal. The saloon was now crowded. The most monstrous sight was the red-headed boy in the captain's seat. Only the older stewards were on duty, the younger men being needed for the balers. Our young fellow had been replaced by a thin, ascetic-looking man with the voice and mien of an old family butler. I was looking through the menu (beautifully printed) when this man began, in precise tones, "Upon an occasion like this, sir, it is best to choose simple dishes; anything made up cannot be good." I therefore chose grilled pork sausages.

Incidentally, the *Tahiti's* chef was behaving like a hero. Under normal conditions he is a great man who hardly ever sees a pot; but now, having been turned out of his great galley when the

pumps which fed the galley fires with crude oil were needed in the engine-room, he had marched with a small staff to a disused little galley in the crew's quarters, where he was gamely cooking for nearly three hundred people, making every effort to produce meals of creditable variety.

At a favourable moment I asked the elderly steward, "Ever been shipwrecked before?"

"Four times!" he whispered, bending over respectfully with a mustard-pot.

Standing casually immediately without the boat-deck vestibule was Denis O'Hara, the deck steward. He might have been lurking, rather confidently, to catch a thief or, more happily, to meet Kathleen O'Neil. As we stepped on to the deck he remarked carelessly, "Oh, you're in No. 1 boat, sir—this one!" He pointed towards the nearest boat.

"And Dick—Mr. Matthews?" We are not anxious to be separated. I foresaw perfectly horrible anxiety with Dick in one boat and myself in another.

"The same!" said Denis instantly, assuming nonchalance as the other passengers came on deck.

He walked amongst the people like an efficient shepherd gently culling sheep, giving each the number of his boat, and doing it so cleverly that nobody was alarmed, although he knew that a few minutes earlier the bulkhead had developed a bulge which, unless the desperate shoring-up operations were successful, would force the abandoning of the ship. Denis was probably obeying a taciturn order from the chief steward. "Tell them their boat numbers; and don't frighten them while you're at it!"

Not knowing what to think, and becoming slightly alarmed, we remained in a small group near the vestibule doors watching the sun dropping to the western horizon.

Came darkness, and we were now a trifle dazed and pathetically obedient like sheep. The kerosene lamps hooked to the deck-houses were lighted.

A few minutes later the large flock had subdivided into small flocks, each gathered near a life-boat. I presume an order had been given; I did not hear it. I simply found myself near my life-boat. An unearthly silence was upon us. Even the great ship seemed to be waiting in deadly silence.

Soon now we should be down on those dark waters, and we looked fearfully at the life-boats.

Some minutes passed, and still we waited. An officer came

quickly from the wireless-room; there was whispering, and again, like sheep, the small groups broke up and were scattered about the deck. A crisis had passed; they had managed to shore up the bulkhead.

About two hours later we saw parties of seamen engaged near the boats. "The sailors!" it was whispered; "they're getting the boats ready!"

In a perfectly nonchalant manner these men went about their business. Usually such jolly, shy kind of fellows—painting deck-houses and scrubbing decks in the morning—they now appeared sinister in the dim light. They removed the canvas-topped lids from the boxes containing the spare rope from the davits. One of them seriously shocked a yachting passenger by placing the box lid the wrong way up on the deck. "Most unlucky!" said the yachtsman, turning the lid over; "I've been a yachtsman for thirty years—and I know!"

What precisely he knew just then, we could not say, neither did we care very much. However, he added very little to our gaiety just then by remarking: "Once we're away from the vessel in the boats we should be all right; it's the launching that's so ticklish. I once saw a lifeboat full of people being launched from a sinking vessel and"—he hesitated—"well, perhaps I had better not say—but it was an awful sight!"

It was, we were certain. He need not have hesitated. He had painted a vivid picture of one set of life-boat ropes fouling while the others ran out. We could see all the people being spilled out into the sea. I heard their shrieks!

Having completed their preparations, the sailors stood about in small groups talking in hoarse whispers.

"Is it serious? Are we now going into the boats?" I asked one of them.

The man looked startled, and glanced at one of his mates who said, "Wot the 'eil d'you think we're 'ere fur?"

The long minutes became longer hours. At intervals great trays of coffee and biscuits were brought by the stewards. The coffee helped, but the cheery, brotherly attitude of the *Tahiti* stewards helped much more.

At eleven o'clock the wireless men rigged a loud speaker on the deck for our amusement. We heard the Wellington (New Zealand) announcer giving the news of the day. News about the local stock market was not a bit interesting, but our excitement can be imagined when the announcer began, "About the R.M.S.

*Tahiti*—"I noticed the fingers of a wireless man creeping towards the switch; evidently we should not hear too much. "About the R.M.S. *Tahiti*, I have just telephoned the Union Steamship Company. I am told that a Norwegian cargo vessel, the *Penybryn*, expects to reach the stricken ship at noon to-morrow. I'm afraid there is no more news. 'The Moon is Low, 'tis Time for Love,'" continued the announcer with hardly a break, "sung by Miss Ethel Smith, accompanied by the Midhurst Orchestra—"The Moon is Low, 'tis Time for Love"—Miss Ethel Smith!" Followed the beat of a piano and the sob of a violin, and a woman's voice.

Came midnight, and the sheep were still resting about the sheep-yard, waiting in the semi-darkness.

"All passengers to their boat stations! All passengers to their boat stations!"

The sailors stood to. The sheep formed into their small flocks. The silence was complete; the great funnel rising above us with its curling black smoke, seemed to be listening.

"But I don't know what to do. What shall I do?" It was the old lady talking to the seaman near her.

"It's all right, ma'am!" said the sailor gruffly, yet kindly. "At the right moment the captain will issue his instructions in a clear, ringing voice."

"What's that—the captain will—?"

"Issue his instructions in a clear, ringing voice!" repeated the sailor, with a faint note of reproach. The old lady was evidently not much of a reader!

And again we waited, dim figures whose life-belts caught what light came from the kerosene lanterns, clutching rugs and coats which sometimes hid bags and small treasured possessions.

Again that heavy silence!

"Like a sheep dumb before her shearer!" I thought.

"Another crisis," I whispered to Dick, "and I think it's passing—the pumps are still going, and they haven't abandoned the baling."

"Passengers will go below to the promenade deck and take up positions below their boats."

The order was definite, and very quietly, without undue haste, the little flocks broke up and filed through the vestibule doors, down the grand companion and out on to the promenade deck.

Gradually the waiting people began whispering. "I hope both ends work together—when we're going down!" I heard.

Waiting again! The long, white keels still above!

Hurry—quick! For God's sake let's get this thing over! Let us down—starve—anything, but wait.

Still waiting! All down the long deck the small flocks of docile sheep.

"All passengers in the lounge! All passengers in the lounge!"

The sheep obeyed and were mustered in the big lounge, once a charming room with chintz-covered chairs and comfortable sofas, small tables with grey silk covers, and rose-shaded lamps; but now, untidy, dark and sombre, smelling of orange peel, stale coffee, food and kerosene.

The big room was overcrowded, and very soon it became stiflingly hot and foul-smelling. Some very brave sheep used their brains and opened the windows. And still we waited.

"I think another crisis has passed," Dick whispered. "They'll be throwing us into the damn boats one of these times by mistake!"

"Ladies and gentlemen!" It was the chief officer at the lounge doors. "Ladies and gentleman—please don't worry—we've just heard the Norwegian vessel will be alongside in the morning, so we're going to try to hang on for the night; we *should* be able to hang on for the night."

The officer paused; we could barely see his anxious face in the dim light.

"Try to rest!" he went on gently, "try to rest! This is one of the occasions when we have, luckily, plenty of boats—boats to burn. And if we have to call you, we shall want the women and children first."

But the night passed and the order did not come.

When the morning offered enough light to see about us, Dick and I ventured on to the boat deck. The sailors, those rough sinister figures of the night before, were sprawling near each of the lifeboats sleeping like children. The fellows whose boat was nearest the games locker had packed themselves into it, like tidy bananas in a crate. The stewards were still baling, and they were still laughing and chipping each other. The hum of machinery could be heard in the engine-room. Altogether the ship still lived "tentatively." The stern had sunk a trifle lower and seemed more disinclined to rise when the big waves crept up. Passengers were obviously *de trop* on the boat deck; we soon went below.

They brought us coffee and biscuits, and from the lounge railing we could see them sweeping the dining-saloon, getting ready for breakfast. It was delightful.



I met the chief officer on the grand companion. "Look here," he said, "you might let them all know that we've just been talking with the Norwegian; she expects to be with us a little after noon."

"I say, old chap," I replied, "is that really true—really true? They're apt to believe me; I don't want to destroy my credit."

"Dinkum!" said he, which is Australian for a strong affirmative.

I gave the glad news to each tired little group in the lounge. They clapped their hands; I might have been an item. Some believed me!

The three good souls were on their sofa. I told them. The big red-haired woman thanked me with her eyes, and glanced towards the red-headed lad. For his sake, she was glad. Otherwise, all had been well with her. She agreed with me, with her eyes, that the red-headed lad was rather enjoying it, but that her Highland imagination had pictured what might have been.

Breakfast was a delightful meal, like a joyous picnic. "No milk in my tea, please," I heard Dick say to the steward; and it was delightful to think that he could choose, that he could even have hot tea, and served respectfully, too. The milk was almost dangerously rich; there was a great profusion of fruit, and the simple food was cooked excellently, all capped by a fascinating menu with delightful lines and decorative leads.

Gone were the terrors of the night. A radiant day of hope had dawned.

"The Norwegian is coming; she'll be alongside at about two! 'A little after noon,' they said; that should be about two. We should see her smoke at noon." Faces were smiling; despair had gone.

"They say they may be able to save our light luggage; and look, the sea is much calmer—getting calmer and calmer—just arranged for us. Really, it's extraordinary the way things have worked out. It will make it easy getting across to her. Thank God we shan't have to spend another night on this ship. Oh, wasn't it awful? Another night would about——"

There was a great running to and fro with suit-cases, people searching eagerly through their big trunks, selecting what they valued most, and jamming this into suit-cases until basp trouble became general and ropes were in demand.

We were offered an excellent midday dinner, but we were much too excited to spend much time on that. Soon we were all on the

boat deck, most of us armed with glasses which swept the southwestern horizon for the column of smoke we longed so much to see.

At about two o'clock I saw the purser hurrying along the deck from the wireless-room to the bridge. "Any news?" I asked.

"Twenty miles off!" he said.

"Twenty miles off!" I told the other men; "just over the horizon really."

"She's probably doing about seven knots," said one of the men; "seven into twenty goes about three times. It's now just after two—that will make it about five-thirty; it gets dark here soon after six—she's just in time—a close thing. They can get the women and kiddies over before dark."

I was in the lounge chatting with some of the women-folk when the chief officer appeared. "We're going to fire a rocket, ladies and gentlemen," said he; "don't be alarmed if you hear an explosion."

"To guide the Norwegian," we said; "of course she might be a bit out in her reckoning."

Now that we were all safe, we decided to open a subscription list to show the ship's company our gratitude. The delicate millionaire tactfully asked to be allowed to place his name at the bottom of the list; it seemed decent of him! We thought it slightly snobbish of the wealthy merchant to object to a second-class lady being on the committee, but she was rather a gas-bag when you came to think of it—now that we were safe! And, of course, she was a second-saloon lady, and not nearly so well turned out as the wealthy merchant's wife who occupied (had reoccupied) one of the best cabins.

The night with its horrors had passed. We were now no longer men and women praying to God to help us, to save us from the awful thing. We were again members of society; but not for long!

A queer hush had fallen on a small group of men near the vestibule door; one of the officers had been with them.

"There has been a mistake," they said quietly; "the Norwegian is forty miles off—not twenty—forty!"

"Six into forty goes about seven times—seven hours! That means ten o'clock."

Another night of darkness on the waters—in that awful lounge. But no—not quite a night, just about half.

Dick and I paid our little car another visit about this time. Emily had some valuable souvenirs on her. I thought of removing

them. "Only—in case!" I quickly said to myself; but the mischief had been done! I had shown lack of faith.

Back on the boat deck we immediately sensed that atmosphere of fear which we had learnt to know. Elderly men were sitting quietly in chairs, looking pale and older. There was a strained expression on all faces now.

"Any news?" we asked.

"The Norwegian, they've just heard, is eighty miles off—not twenty, not forty, but eighty. They've been making for our original position; we've been drifting at the rate of two miles an hour. We're still drifting at that rate; it means sixteen hours—at least sixteen hours."

"And they say," whispered another passenger, "that with all the weight of water in the stern, and the bows empty, she may break her back at any minute. And they don't know whether to put us in the boats and risk death for some of the women through shock and exposure—or to hang on!"

I do not know how others felt; I merely know that I tried not to care.

The sun was sinking towards the western horizon, now a mass of not altogether kindly clouds. There was a presage of wind, and I thought much of it. As the vessel rose on each big wave there began that creak—creak—creak which is not an unhealthy sign on a well-found ship, but which sounded ominous on the dying *Tahiti*.

The joy of the past morning was now demanding its toll; although much more tired, we were less able to rest.

We had an evening meal. As we entered the dining-saloon our life-belts were inspected, to see that they were tied correctly. The fuller bosomed women must have felt extremely uncomfortable. The life-belts made our chests hot, engendering a kind of prickly heat which was most annoying. There was not much conversation in the saloon; few of us made any serious attempt to be hearty.

The sun went down as we sat in the dimly lighted lounge. Another night was beginning.

"If they put us in the boats shortly, there'll be some fun!" Dick whispered.

Once a tall steward came round with a tray of coffee and biscuits.

"The boats at last!" we decided, but now without lively terror. "This coffee is really now meant to hearten us—oh, well, it doesn't matter!"

We learnt to hate our life-belts. They became the outward and visible sign of a great fear. One young woman who told us she was a free-lance journalist had assumed the proportions of a whale. She said, "Without three or four frocks, I am lost in a hard world; they won't permit baggage in the boats; they can't very well undress me—I've got four frocks on!" In addition she wore a cloak over her life-belt, and moved about like a hermit crab.

Rumours were flying about now. During those moments when the Norwegian was expected at any minute, the ship's people had lost some of their reserve; we therefore knew more about the *Tahiti's* condition than was perhaps good for us. The fear of the vessel breaking her back with the terrific weight aft and empty holds forward was not really absurd. It would have been extremely unpleasant to find ourselves spilt out from the fuggy lounge into the cold sea.

I had returned to a sofa immediately within the lounge doors when a sharp explosion was heard, followed by a gleam of light across the lounge windows.

"A rocket!" some of the men shouted. "A rocket! The Norwegian—it must be the Norwegian—let's go and see!"

"No," I whispered to the women near me, "don't believe it yet—wait!"

Some men returned. "We've seen a light—the Norwegian is coming!" they said.

"Wait a little longer," I urged; "you can see anything you want badly to see on the ocean at night."

Other men returned. "Go on!" we heard; "there's no light; it was a falling star you saw."

More of the men came back, some certain they had seen a light, others equally sure they had not, these latter laughing a little bitterly when they said, "They've seen the Rroo!"

I decided to look for myself. As I passed up the grand companion I met the chief officer. "Is there a light?" I asked. But he, noting the crowding men at the lounge doors and the anxious faces of the now thoroughly roused women peering through, smelt panic. In unmistakable tone he shouted, "Back to the lounge—back to the lounge, at once!"

But the *Tahiti* continued firing rockets, and glorious flares began burning from the bridge. The peasant of the ocean was returning slowly over the south-western horizon. The aristocrat of the Pacific was waiting very humbly.

We were saved.

# THE MAN WHO STOLE THE CROWN JEWELS

*By*  
JOHN MAY

**T**ALBOT EDWARDS lived with his wife in quarters over the jewel room in the Martin Tower. Although an old man of seventy-seven, he made a fairly comfortable living from tips and the wage his appointment brought him.

Nowadays over a quarter of a million people a year go to see the crown jewels at the Tower of London. But in the years just after Charles II became king, strangely enough very few evinced any interest in the regalia.

Oliver Cromwell had stolen the royal jewels which belonged to the King Charles he executed. And after this real insult had been added to so fatal an injury, Sir Robert Vyner, as king's goldsmith, had started his term of office by having shining new regalia made so that the second King Charles could be properly crowned.

Despite all this, the perquisites of the master of the jewel house had become greatly reduced, and the holder of the office had obtained permission to exhibit the regalia to visitors at so much per head, to make the position more interesting financially.

Although, as events very shortly proved, people were to come in crowds later that summer, visitors were not then numerous. So old Talbot Edwards welcomed the appearance on a bright April morning of a man and woman who asked if they might see the curiosities in the tower.

The man looked benevolent enough; he had a longish beard, a cap with ear-flaps, and all the formalities of dress that belonged to a doctor of divinity. He wore a cloak instead of the usual gown, and his wife, though a well-set-up woman, was quietly dressed and somewhat pale. These were the kind of visitors Edwards liked. The old keeper chatted happily as he led them down stone stairs to the vaulted room where the royal jewellery was kept.

The chamber was divided by a stout iron grille. Edwards unlocked a gate in this, let himself through and locked it again. As he uncovered the regalia, he apologized: "You will pardon me, I am sure. It is one of the formalities to lock myself in when

showing the jewels. The regulations have to be observed, for one never knows when some desperate character may appear. Not, of course, that yourselves——”

The doctor of divinity agreed. The precaution was a wise one, he said.

Old Edwards knew how to show off the jewels. He breathed a reverent “Ah!” as he displayed the crown itself, then stood impressively silent while his visitors gazed.

Edwards reverently indicated two semicircles of gold rising from the top of the *crosses-pates*. “These arches,” he said proudly, “are considered to be the mark of independent sovereignty.”

In true guide style, he began to mumble through the obvious things the visitors could very well see for themselves:

“They are edged with rows of silver pearls and enriched with clusters of gems. On the top is a mound of gold, surmounted——” A faint cry from the minister’s wife interrupted him. She crumpled and slid to the floor.

Startled and upset, he hurriedly opened the gate of the grille. “Dolly, Dolly, come quickly please!” he called from the foot of the stairway.

The minister was supporting his wife against the grille. Turning to the agitated keeper, he said quietly, “It is only a faint, I think, Mr. Edwards. Perhaps you had better come and lock your gate. She will be recovered in a few moments.”

This solicitude for the safety of his exhibits made Edwards even better disposed to his two visitors. When Mrs. Edwards came bustling down a few seconds later, he insisted with her that the doctor of divinity and his lady, now recovering, should come upstairs and drink a glass of wine. Taking the arm of the minister and Mrs. Edwards the lady went slowly upstairs. Soon she was reclining comfortably on a bed, tended by the old man’s wife.

In another room the minister discoursed in low tones with Edwards and complimented him upon his excellent cellar. The excitement of the harmless diversion his wife had provided, and the wine which he appreciated with true ecclesiastic palate had put the doctor in fine fettle to talk.

There was mild regret on both sides, then, when the minister’s wife recovered sufficiently to allow the pair to leave.

“A charming and unusual pair,” was the verdict of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards. Seemingly the doctor of divinity thought the same of them, for a few days later, we see the now familiar minister being welcomed again by the Edwards. They ask about

his wife and he has to admit that he is alone this time. "She is at home resting, but sends the kindest of greetings to her friends 'confined in the Tower of London.'" The caller is concealing something under his cloak as he enters their rooms. But the mystery is explained when on a third visit that week-end we hear Mrs. Edwards prettily thanking the minister's wife for four pairs of beautiful white gloves.

"I felt I just had to express my gratitude for all you did for me that day I was so unwell," said the lady. "I was only telling our daughter the other day how kind you were. There seem to be so few really nice people about nowadays——"

"Tis bad enough in England," interrupted old man Edwards, "but who our son is mixing with out in Flanders a-soldiering I'm scared to think. These foreigners, they tell me——"

"Yes, think of it," Mrs. Edwards joined in, "he's been away ten years. I doubt if we'll recognize him when he comes back."

"If he *do* come," growled the old man. "They say these Frenchy girls——"

"I find it somewhat wearying," the doctor said later, to his wife, "that old man and the tales of his soldiering son. The young pup's having the time of his life in Flanders, I'll be bound."

Nevertheless, it was the same respected and respectable doctor who flapped his cloak around him at Edwards's door a few nights later in the cool of a May evening.

No, the doctor would not come in; he had guests awaiting him at home. It was about them he had called. They had heard about Mr. Edwards and they very much wanted to see the marvellous jewels which were in his care. It was very nice of Mr. Edwards to say they would be so welcome. Unfortunately, they had to go out of town early in the morning, and the doctor had hoped—well, would it be possible for Mr. Edwards to gratify them with the sight of the crown jewels at a little before the usual hour?

Mr. Edwards was most kind, said the doctor. Could they come about eight the next morning? Most generous! The cloak swung in a bow and flapped off down the darkening street.

"From the back," thought old Edwards to himself, "the doctor looks more like a soldier of fortune than a soldier of the Lord. There's no sword hooking up his cloak, but he's got just the right swagger."

The keen-faced Irishman at one end of the table threw down his cards and quaffed his glass.

"We have far bigger stakes to play for than this," he said. Thankfully picking up the few coins they had not already lost to him, his three companions showed such comic and mutual relief that "Colonel" Thomas Blood could not but chuckle.

The solitary candle standing between them threw a caricature of his jutting nose and chin on the wall of the low-ceilinged room. He rested his elbows on the table and looked closely at the three of them.

"Yes," he drawled, "I am going to gamble with your necks again, me boys! Your lives are the stake, but the prize—why 'tis the biggest even I have tried for!" There was a bantering challenge in his voice, and a vivacity in the devil-may-care bearing of this black-haired man of forty summers which overshadowed the personalities of the three young adventurers.

Each was a daring, if not desperate character. Yet though they were tried, hard-headed men, all three were under the other's spell. Admiration in their eyes spoke their readiness to join him in any venture, however hazardous. And, indeed, in the past they had proved this right up to the hilt.

Blood was evidently in high spirits that night. Early in the evening one of them had whispered: "The old man has one of his mad ideas; I know the signs. We'll hear about it before the night's done!"

The knowledge was both disquieting and a relief to them. The colonel had been moody and movement had been restricted since his last daring design had miscarried. For three months they had gone abroad at night only, cautious because £1,000 was the price upon the head of each one of them.

A royal proclamation, issued by order of His Majesty King Charles II, described how the gang had seized on December 6, 1670, the august person of the Duke of Ormond while he was riding in his carriage through the streets of London. It rightly said they planned to carry off the duke and hold him to ransom. But such a document could not be expected to tempt a man out and about much, especially when it offered such a reward for the apprehension of "any of the miscreants concerned in this dastardly escapade."

They were bored by being cooped up in London. But though they ached for liberty, they none the less retained the caution which makes the daring of men like these such a deadly thing for law-abiding citizens to combat. Months of "retirement" had, in fact, left them more apprehensive than was their custom. One of the



three spoke the question in the minds of the rest in answer to Blood's challenging remark :

"I know we need funds, but this is not going to be another vain attempt like December's, colonel?"

"Nobody minds running for it—*with* the stuff," growled another. "But I'll be hanged if I want to be chased again, and nothing to show for it but a damned proclamation!"

Blood's face darkened. "You'll be hanged. To be sure you'll be hanged, Tim Kelfy! And like as not because you're too scared to fight for your living like a man! What has happened to you fellows since the year began? Has sleeping soft made cowards of you all?" He went on to talk more reasonably. "I know as well as you that Ormond slipped through our fingers. I lost more than anyone, over that. I had old scores to settle with that duke as I have with others. You only missed your share of the cash."

"Aye, but we got Charlie's blessing and £1,000 life insurance each!" said Kelfy, trying to restore good humour.

Tom Kelfy's reference irritated Blood still further. His eyes blazed, but in contrast he spoke very softly and sarcastically. The words came through the veil of a sneer.

"Perhaps I should remind you three gallant gentlemen," he said, "of exploits in which I have been honoured by your assistance, but which have *nevertheless* proved successful!"

"Maybe you have forgotten the little town of Ferrybridge, where despite your assistance I rescued Captain Mason when he was on his way to the assizes at York.

"Ten troopers and their officer could not stop my little band, nor hold their prisoner of state! But I had forgotten; you were four years younger then—doubtless you *still* had the courage of youth!"

The three moved uncomfortably. The accusation of cowardice was absolutely undeserved, but none liked to interrupt this fiery man.

"Lesser exploits have been profitable. Perhaps you will remember them, too, if this proclamation has not turned your brains to water, as well as your bowels! When you have had a price on your head as often as I, you will not take it so seriously. They have chased me in England, Ireland and Scotland. Aye, and more than once in each of 'em! But have I been caught yet, and held?"

Blood was so pleased by this time with his own account of his adventures—which were in truth quite as outrageous as he had outlined, and even more astonishing to law-abiding persons than to his three desperate companions—that he was once more his loquacious merry-tempered self.

"Make up your minds," he said, knowing well that they were now willing to accept almost any proposal. He sat back in his chair, looking cheerfully from one to another.

"Are you ready to follow me, the man who has lived on his wits for twenty years without being taken? Or do you want to pick the pockets of drunkards to make a living?"

There was a scraping as of chairs being drawn closer round a table, then silence broken by a low tone of voice. The words hardly went across the dim-lit room, let alone being heard outside it.

*Colonel Blood was unfolding his latest and most daring plan.* His three accomplices, Tim Kelfy, James Desborough and Francis Perrot, listened and were lost. Like men inspired they talked earnestly on far into the night.

Many drinking at the inn that evening would have been vastly entertained to know that the famous colonel was sheltering under the same roof as they. At this stage of his career, Blood was rapidly acquiring that reputation which eventually led the public to regard even the news of his funeral as just another ruse to elude the authorities! It may be hard to believe now that he was buried and exhumed and buried again before London was satisfied that death and not Blood had won the final trick. But it would be readily understood by anyone who could have heard the typical comments of a surgeon and his friend who left the inn that night about half-past nine.

It would have amused Blood, also, to walk behind these worthies. While he was planning his next escapade they were still talking of the last!

"A villainous, but most interesting career. People tell me that he married a respectable young woman by name of Holcraft," said one. "Came from Lancashire, I believe."

"Yes," said the surgeon. "Took her back to Ireland. Won an assignment of land for soldiering. Then got on the commission of peace. Only twenty-two at the time. Smooth tongued as a parson, I should think."

"A great pity he does not employ his talents for more peaceful ends," rejoined the surgeon's friend.

"A number of them were executed over that affair of the Dublin insurrection, were they not? He was ringleader in that sorry affair, I believe? Very sad."

The surgeon had evidently a lurking admiration for Blood.

"Clever fellow, all the same," he said. "Led old Ormond and the Earl of Orrery the devil of a dance. Hid in Holland of all

places. Then came back to get mixed up in the Pentland Hills fighting when five hundred of them got killed, you remember."

"You seem very well informed about the gentleman's movements?" said the first, with a mild query.

"Yes, I went along to bleed Sir John Reresby," said the surgeon. "Reresby was up north when Blood rescued that fellow Mason they were taking to the assizes."

"And that is where we may expect to see Colonel Blood very shortly, I suppose," said the other, as he left the surgeon at the door of a largish house. "Good night, my friend."

Little did the surgeon know, as he stumped off to his lodging at Tower Hill, how near he was to the scene of the infamous colonel's next crime. At the inn he and his friend had so recently left, Blood was even then discussing with Desborough, Perrot and Kelfy the final arrangements for the morrow's audacious adventure.

Four horses clattered up to the outer gate of the Tower of London about eight o'clock the next morning. Their riders were the doctor of divinity and his friends who wished to see the crown jewels before they left town—early because of urgent business.

No hint of what this business is about, can be gained from the appearance of these men bestriding the spirited animals which snort steaming breath into the invigorating air of this sunny May morning. The doctor of divinity is easily recognizable as a minister by his cap, his beard and his cloak. If it were he that was in haste one could guess it would be for a christening or a marriage ceremony he had to perform. The dress of the others gives away no clue to what they are or how they employ themselves. Certainly they have an alert rapacious look which is unusual on the faces of a minister's friends. But then this is an unusually broadminded doctor of divinity, and all truly religious people agree that an ecclesiastical minister should mix and have friends among all classes.

Three swing from the saddle, while another gathers the reins of the horses and prepares to wait.

The trio walk through the cobbled courtyards, looking about them curiously as visitors do. There are only a few sleepy guards about, and shortly the visitors have passed over a drawbridge, through huge gateways that echo as they pass under the arch, and have arrived at the Martin Tower. They are received with great civility by Edwards, who has obviously spent the time since he

roze in smartening his apparel and appearance in honour of the important visit of the doctor and his friends.

Apologies for calling so early; protestations that nobody has been inconvenienced the slightest; and they are echoing down the stone steps to the jewel room. To all three it seems eerie to be visiting such a place at such an hour. The cold stones, the prison-like walls are forbidding; the air of the place still dank and smelly after the freshness of riding through the morning mistiness is somewhat depressing. Obviously though, it has little effect upon the good temper of the old caretaker.

The keys jangle and old Edwards is still chatting as he unlocks the door of the safety grille. The others are responding in a preoccupied way, wondering—

The doctor of divinity, suddenly a sinister figure with the cold, hard calculation of a master brigand stamped upon his countenance, takes a silent step forward.

As the gate swings open and the old man, turning his back, is about to walk through, he whips a large handkerchief over Edwards's head. The oft-repeated apologies for the formality of locking himself in with the jewels are gagged into a struggling and terrified silence! In a moment the minister's two villainous companions have seized the old man's arms. A second handkerchief secures his wrists behind him.

From beneath his ecclesiastical cloak the leader whips out a mallet! It is wielded once, twice, three times in detached cold-blooded clouts at Edwards's white head! He slides unconscious to the floor and is heaved aside.

"Hold the gate open, you old rat," says the minister coolly, pushing the body against the grille entrance. "We may want to get out of this trap double quick."

The mallet is as well-planned as the rest of the plot. The minister, incongruous in his attire, seizes the crown Charles II used to make himself king, and with a few well-directed blows flattens in the top.

He thrusts it feverishly into a leather wallet at his waist for which it is still rather too bulky. *Meanwhile one of his companions has unbuckled the belt round his own middle to drop the round gold ball of the orb into the safekeeping of the loose of his breeches.*

At the same time, in a corner, the third is cursing and working furiously, gold filings flying like rain. *Like a blacksmith he hacks away, cutting the three feet of sceptre into two portable halves!*

Peaceful but unconscious attendant in this knaves' workshop, old Edwards is missing another exciting occasion as he continues to sleep under the influence of the minister's all-purpose mallet.

Almost at the same moment as his father was knocked on the head that morning, *young soldier Edwards was knocking at his mother's door.*

Footsteps on the stairs are something not included in the visitors' plans. The noise the villain in the corner makes with his filing drowns the sound of young Edwards's blithe approach until he is almost entering the room. The brain of the gang's leader works like a flash. It *must* be a friend or acquaintance of Edwards, or the intruder would not be about so early in the day.

In a moment he has pulled the third miscreant off his sceptre slicing and is hustling his accomplices up the stairs. He has adopted the doctor of divinity pose like putting on a cloak.

"Good morning, good morning, my friend," he cries, as young Edwards clatters into their midst. "Are you looking for Mr. Edwards? He is just locking up in the jewel room."

The young man grins his thanks and goes eagerly down to meet his father. The others make all haste up the stone stairs and out.

Had the "minister" thought twice he would have known that he had made a tactical error. The instinct for flight aroused by guilty conscience had betrayed him into an over-hasty move. He should have seized Edwards junior and had him help his unconscious father in keeping open the gate. Then the robbers could have taken their time.

The three were making off as rapidly as their pace would allow if they were not to arouse suspicion, while young Edwards bent anxiously over his father and called to them for water. Not having gone far enough to notice the disordered room and the sceptre almost filed in two, he thought the old man had fainted and knocked his head in falling. But the keeper of the jewels was not so much hurt as the villains thought. He sat up, nearly sent his son sprawling, and yelled, "Murder! Help, murder!" at the top of his lungs.

"Stop them! Thieves! Murder!" he bellowed again. The son stood amazed, wondering whether his father had gone mad, and astounded at this welcome home from the wars to the peace of Old England.

Above stairs the girl of the house reacted immediately. She ran into the courtyard, echoing the old man's alarm. "Help!

"Thieves! Murder!" she screamed, and flung herself into the arms of a grateful sentry.

The villain with the file, with no booty to impede his progress, had scuttled off ahead. The minister and the second rogue, one with a wallet full of bent crown, and the other with the orb inside his breeches knocking against his knees at every step, were making what haste they could.

But gold and guilt weigh heavy, and they had only just passed the main guard when the alarm was given. Even then they might have walked out, but the shouts unnerved the second robber. Not wishing to interrupt the "parson's" pleasant chatter which was still being maintained with remarkable coolness, he nudged his elbow and glanced apprehensively over his shoulder. The excitement of "running for it" was one thing; walking when pursued was too much for his nerve.

The nudge was enough for the warder at the drawbridge. His duty was plain but his courage not so evident. He advanced and prepared half-heartedly to bar their progress. Impatient with his companion and rapidly losing his temper, the doctor of divinity whipped out a ready-primed pistol and fired over the guard's head.

Almost before the report the warder fell prostrate on his face. Badly scared, he was thankful to be lying flat. He looked as dead as he could manage, glad to be out of any fighting. With a side kick at this coward, the minister moved now speedily for the first time. He knew the pistol shot would rouse the whole garrison. Seconds were precious.

Rushing past the guard at the Ward House gate (an old soldier who had the courage to make *no* attempt to stop such desperate men), the two sped across the drawbridge.

There was still a chance in one of those hairbreadth escapes that heaven sometimes permits audacious rogues to achieve! Still clinging to the encumbering jewels (one of them could not lose his share unless he abandoned his breeches too!) through the outer gate they panted and on to the wharf.

Shouts now and flying footsteps close behind! The minister, not to be taken while on the run, turned and shot point-blank at his charging pursuer. Captain Beckman was a match for that. He ducked, and the shot whistled through his hair. Next second his adversary was floored with a charge like that of a modern Rugby player!

The other rogue and a second pursuer were another heaving

struggle. A wound one of them had received sprinkling the paving and smearing both in a gory mess.

Young Edwards, shouting and stamping excitedly round, was near spitting both on the one sword.

The minister had been winded. He clung like a leech to his booty, nevertheless. Thrashing round on the stones, he sent men sprawling in every direction till sheer weight of numbers bore him down and the battered crown was wrested from him.

The fight ended then, suddenly. Men stood up, breathing hard, some scowling and some grinning. The minister, still gripped firmly by fully five of them, used one hand to dust himself down. With a sweeping gesture he removed his parson's cap with the quaint ear flaps. The beard came away, too. He smiled broadly at their amazement.

"Yes, gentlemen, you have made a bigger catch than you know. Colonel Thomas Blood, at your service." Then, turning to his captor, he smiled: "A gallant attempt, Captain Beckman, however unsuccessful. *It was for a crown!*"

Jailed in the Tower, Blood's high spirits left him. Two successive failures!

Is it part of this adventure to tell what lifted the cloak of gloom from this silent, dogged and sullen man?

Yes? No detail, then; just bare facts.

Charles was persuaded the king himself should judge this extraordinary person who dared to pocket a reigning monarch's crown. A subject with such force of mind was worthy of his so spirited Majesty.

A subject, also, with great force of personality, the king found. So much so, the sovereign was graciously pleased to restore there and then the colonel's liberty and lands, to give him pardon—and a pension too!

# ROUND THE WORLD IN NINE DAYS

*By*  
MILES HENSLOW

**S**CARCE a year passes without some outstanding achievement of speed or endurance on the land, sea, or in the air; indeed, these events follow one another so rapidly that it is hard to sort one out from the rest, and to be able to say, truthfully, "That is the most wonderful triumph of all." For sheer adventure, however, the magnificent flight around the world by Wiley Post and Harold Gatty in 1931 must stand alone.

It was late in May, 1931, that the world first heard with mild interest of Post's and Gatty's proposed flight, for in these crowded times little attention is paid to anything that is not hard, accomplished fact. However, when it was announced in the American Press that the two aviators had almost concluded their arrangements, and hoped to leave for Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, within the first week of June, the telegraph wires of the world began to hum. What was it all about? Which route had the flyers decided to take? What were their plans? How long did they expect to take? In a matter of hours the news was being printed in every corner of the globe, for not only, it appeared, was this to be a flight which might well make history, but if it was successful it would be the most spectacular achievement in years. Mr. F. C. Hall, a wealthy Oklahoma oil man who was backing the flight, was reputed to have said that he would be surprised if Post did not put his plane round the world in seven days.

There were delays, however, as is so often the case, and on June 22 the two airmen were still awaiting the news that everything was favourable for them. Finally, on June 23, the big white and blue monoplane was wheeled out on to the tarmac in the early hours of the morning, and thousands of people who had heard the news came flocking to the field to cheer the flyers on their way.

The crowd grew suddenly silent as the propeller moved. Stabs of flame shot from the exhaust as the engine burst into life, and the roar of more than four hundred horse-power echoed to the



heavens. Then, to the flash of photographers' bulbs, and the waving of a thousand arms, the plane began to move. A cheer which rose even above the engine's din swept the field. The wheels of the machine turned faster and faster, and the tail lifted. Faster and faster, dwindling in size as it sped away into the wind, the ship at last became air-borne. For one second, as the wheels left the ground, silence fell over the crowd, each man present realizing the suspense of that final moment; and then a last cheer went up. The flyers were safely up. They were on their way.

No one had any doubts as to Wiley Post's ability to meet any emergency that might arise, and Gatty's skill as a navigator was well known. Both men had worked for a full year on their plans, and, as Post said himself shortly before the take-off, the Pratt and Whitney engine upon which the success of the flight and their lives depended, was "as fit as anything he had ever seen."

Racing along through the air on the first stage of the long journey, it seemed that this opinion was justified, for a few hours later a ship, *S.S. Drottingham*, lying one hundred and twenty miles north-east of Cape Race, reported a wireless message from K.H.R.D.W.—their aeroplane—which stated that everything was going well; and at 11.48 a.m. they arrived at Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, having covered the initial eleven hundred miles in excellent time.

By 3.28 p.m., less than eleven hours after leaving New York, they had refuelled and were on their way again, this time heading out across the wide Atlantic, towards Europe. The news of their departure was received with great excitement in Berlin, where the flyers were eventually expected, and, according to a weather forecast from the British meteorological department, everything pointed towards a good journey ahead. No storms had been reported from the Atlantic during the night, and although there was occasional rain in the region of the Irish coast, visibility was predicted to be good.

It was then that the first surprise of this amazing flight occurred. Not until they were actually on their way across the ocean were the officials of the Tempelhof aerodrome, Berlin, told that the airmen would be landing there the next day—their first stop after thousands of miles of travel without sighting land. Immediate preparations were made—but nothing happened, and the world was suddenly startled to learn that the machine was at Sealand aerodrome, Chester, in England!

"Is this England, Scotland or Wales?" Post asked as he

clambered from the cockpit to meet the puzzled men who ran to meet him; and their bewilderment may well be imagined, when they were told calmly: "We have just flown the Atlantic." The two airmen then explained that they were slightly lost; they had met with half a gale on the last stage of their hop, but that they had sighted a coastline early in the morning. Actually that coast was the west of Ireland, and they had flown on, crossing the Irish Sea before landing. The aeroplane had behaved splendidly, however, and after a good meal and a hurried look at maps and weather charts, they were eager to be on their way.

Crowds flocked to the aerodrome the moment the news of their arrival spread through the countryside, and once more they were uproariously cheered as the giant monoplane gathered speed and took-off for Berlin—originally intended as their first stop. Their flying time for the Atlantic crossing had been sixteen hours and seventeen minutes, and at 12.45 p.m. on June 24 they landed again at Hanover, Germany. Five minutes later they were in the air again, but landed almost immediately to refuel, and it was not until 3.30 in the afternoon that the plane came roaring over the heads of vast crowds at Tempelhof aerodrome, to glide in to a perfect landing, less than thirty-six hours after leaving New York.

Here, for the first time, the full story of the Atlantic crossing was told, but not until they had almost fought their way from the machine to the aerodrome buildings.

Later, however, when they spoke of the Atlantic crossing, it was realized how lucky they were to be there at all. For three hours visibility had been so bad that they had been unable to see the engine, and it was by the grace of God alone that they found a hole in the clouds, and saw land below them—Wales.

At 2.38 a.m. they left Berlin for Moscow, where they landed again after nearly nine hours in the air. German pilots of the Deutsche Luft Hanza company had marked their maps for them as a final effort to do anything in their power to help the great adventure. At Moscow there were few people to welcome them, and for this they were not sorry; they both said that it had been the toughest stretch of the trip to date, and they were glad of the chance of undisturbed rest. Until then, reports of their progress had been scanty, for, as Gatty said, he had all his work cut out with navigation problems, and had little or no time to use the radio; but after leaving Moscow every detail of their flight was headlines in the papers of the world.

Taking off at dawn, with new maps and two hundred and

seventy-five gallons of petrol, they headed east once more. At 7.5 a.m. June 25, they were reported passing over Omsk, Siberia, and just after 9.30 they landed at Novo-Sibirisk. The trans-Siberian journey was undoubtedly the most hazardous section of their flight over land, for apart from the huge tracts of land in which they might well be lost for weeks should they be forced to descend, they had to fly over afforested, mountainous regions as well, where any landing must mean complete disaster.

At 6.45 that same evening, however, they were off again, completing the next hop in safety, and with comparatively favourable conditions, landing at Irkutsk at 12.55. They had thus travelled half round the world on the fourth day since leaving home. But they did not waste any time, and at 2.10 on the Saturday morning left again for Blagovetschensk, which they reached in just under six hours. A brief message from this Siberian post announced that the flyers would be taking-off for Khabarovsk at 10.30, a town some three hundred and fifty miles distant, and would refuel there for the next big hop to Nome. It was here that the first mishap occurred. On landing, the wheels of the monoplane became bogged in the mud, and for some time all efforts to free it were without success; but, working frantically and against time, men and horses were secured, and at last, heaving and straining, the volunteer crew dragged it clear and on to firm ground. By good fortune no damage was done, and other than by a loss of valuable hours the success of the flight was in no way jeopardized; and when they roared away from the field towards the boundaries of Asia they had already put behind them nine thousand miles of the total fifteen thousand to be flown.

"Post and Gatty well ahead of schedule," came the next message. "Pushing relentlessly on, they are speeding eastward across the Siberian forests *en route* for Nome."

At 2.30 a.m. they arrived at Khabarovsk, refuelled, and left almost immediately for Alaska, from whence the next news was heard of them. Four coastguard boats patrolling the Bering Sea reported the reception of radio signals, but static was bad and no intelligible messages were picked up. Six and a quarter hours after the take-off, however, they landed at Soloman beach, thirty odd miles from Nome. It was then Sunday, June 29, and with the last stages of that epic flight already in sight they had used up only six days and seventeen hours of their schedule. Less than three hours later the engine roared out again, and the plane vanished into the haze which lay between them and Fairbanks.

By now they were dead tired, and the strain of the flight had begun to tell on them. Sleep must be had at all costs, even if only for an odd half-hour, so urgent messages were sent on ahead, and preparations were made for their reception. Tents and beds were erected on the field to enable them to snatch a handful of sleep while the plane was being refuelled.

In America the news of their progress was being followed by an ever-increasing number of people, and terrific enthusiasm greeted every fresh morsel of news which filtered through from the "back of beyond." Some there were who predicted almost impossible things of the flyers; others were cautious to the extreme; but scarce a soul in the whole of that huge continent was not thinking of the big white and blue monoplane that was making history for the United States, and of the two gallant men who were risking everything to carry out their plans.

Then from Fairbanks, came the next message. "We are very tired, but the worst is over. By the day after tomorrow we should be in New York again." And New York prepared to greet them as only New York knows how. At 9.24 a.m. they left Fairbanks for Edmonton, which they reached at 7.30 that same evening after a strenuous hop of nearly fifteen hundred miles. At about 6.30 the following morning they were off again. July 1, and their goal was almost in sight. Tired, dead-beat, but with the knowledge of success spurring them on, they urged the big machine onwards across America. At 5.15 p.m. they reached Cleveland, Ohio, paused for a brief half-hour for fuel and a stretch, and took-off on the final lap.

A crowd thousands strong had reached the big Roosevelt field hours before the plane was expected, but in spite of that, everyone scanned the horizon minute after minute, in eagerness to be the first to shout, "Here they come." By 8 p.m. the roads to the airport were packed with cars and pedestrians, and still the crowds seemed to swell. At last, just before a quarter to nine, a hush fell over the amazing gathering. Someone pointed, shouted. The shout rose into a roar of yelling and cheering as a speck on the dark horizon took shape and grew. The plane roared round the field, and then with engine idling glided in to land. They had succeeded. From New York to New York, completely round the world in less than ten short days.

# GRENFELL OF LABRADOR

By

A. J. RUSSELL

**T**wo English boys who had been accustomed to roving the sands of Dee at will were taken by their nurse to a Welsh village to spend their holiday. The Welsh boys resented their intrusion into their games and drove them from the village green.

One of the two, Wilfred Grenfell, a boy of about eight, happened to have among his forbears Sir Richard Grenville, the blood-letting, buccaneering, fire-and-glass-eating adventurer who alone fought the Spanish fleet to a standstill in the Azores. The thought of these Welsh boys daring so to treat English boys filled the eight-year-old lad with the same spirit of defiance that had animated his illustrious ancestor.

The two youngsters returned and stormed the village green!

Wilfred grew to manhood. With the same spirit of high adventure still animating him what was he to do in these latter days of Queen Victoria and the mild reign of Edward the Peacemaker?

In horse racing there are two types—the sprinters and the stayers. In the world of adventure there are kindred types—those who sprint to an objective, achieve it and return to wear the laurels of a brief but successful exploit, and those who set out on one great adventure composite of a multitude of adventures that last a lifetime. Of such high mettle and staying power is—Grenfell of Labrador!

Nearly fifty years ago he went out to the sub-Arctic, to a country as vast and barren as it is strikingly beautiful, yet a place of forbidding rocks and snows swept by a sea of ice and described by the early explorers as “of no use to human beings”!

He found this tract of the British Empire to be unknown and even unwanted, neglected and in great distress. He relieved its agony, and gave it health and prosperity.

The first ship that ever sailed to Newfoundland was called the *Grenfell* after Sir Richard Grenville who could never spell his name correctly. But the vessel which Sir Wilfred first took into these seas was the sailing-ship *Albert* captained by a Cornishman, a martinet on discipline. Newfoundland, which is half-way to New York, was reached on the seventeenth day out.

Grenfell's adventures began at once. Just as he was admiring a rocky headland, his first sight of the American coast, he was astounded to see the high cliffs, guarding St. John's Harbour, becoming enveloped in smoke. At the same time he felt the wind from the shore becoming hotter and hotter. He had arrived to find the city of St. John's in flames for the third time in its history. Already some of the shipping had been burned as they lay at anchor and it looked as though his own ship might have to take refuge behind an iceberg.

It seemed to him that his arrival in the town was opportune, just as it was when later he arrived on the scene of a shipwreck to find a lusty Eskimo, with axe upraised, about to cleave open a box of T.N.T. explosive—to see what was inside!

But the inhabitants of St. John's were surprisingly cheerful and quite content to speed him on his course to the fishing fleet where his offer of medical help would be still more welcome, for out there were over one thousand ships carrying thirty thousand souls.

This great fleet had just sailed for the summer fishery. Following them for four hundred miles he came to Round Hill Island, a wonderful landmark clothed in verdant green and set in the purest blue. Great schools of whales "noisily slapping the calm surface of the sea, as in an abandon of joy, dived and rose——"

The new arrival anchored among many schooners in a wonderful natural harbour off Labrador. They flew the Red Ensign but could not have attracted more attention had they flown the Jolly Roger. A flag of welcome was quickly run up on every mast-head and there were immediate calls for medical aid.

Nearly a thousand sick people requisitioned Grenfell's services on that very first voyage. Sir Wilfred describes some cases which were outstanding for pathos and utter helplessness. The torture of an ingrowing toe-nail, which was put right in a few minutes, had incapacitated one toiler for years.

The number of cases of anæmia, beri-beri, scurvy, dyspepsia and tuberculosis due to poverty of diet was abnormally high. Among the Eskimos there had been terrible epidemics.

A boy came on deck with the globe of one eye injured and suffering great pain. Grenfell removed the eye and the youth left grateful, but afraid that his girl would lose her affection for him now that he was so disfigured. He was told to call later and take his chance of getting a blue false eye to match his real one. Still later the doctor was accosted by a youth who asked him to look at his eyes. A first glance showed nothing wrong and the inquirer

was told to call for a special examination, whereupon he pointed proudly to the false eye which was such a perfect match as to be undistinguishable.

The poverty of diet was seen all along the coast, even among the animals. One night starving pigs broke into a church and ate the Bible. When asked what to do about the cases of beri-beri and scurvy Grenfell's reply was "cabbages." The indignant answer was that the summer was too short to grow them. His reply to that was to lengthen the summer by raising the young plants under glass. It was a new idea to Labrador but it gave the population green food and the vitamins needed for perfect health.

The Eskimos call the Northern Lights—"The Spirits of the Dead at Play." Their mysterious aurora illuminating the embattled cliffs which rise along the northern end of Labrador to a height of two or three thousand feet give this wonderful coast, beautiful by day, a romantic charm by night. Whatever worries one had could be lost by watching the fantastic dances of the Northern Lights playing over these mountainous cliffs.

Grenfell would watch them often as he set out to answer an urgent summons, and rarely were his journeys without other excitement. One Easter Day he was summoned to attend a case sixty miles away. He started off and on the second day attempted to cross a frozen bay. Nearing the farther shore he found that the ice had thinned and he and his dogs drifted seawards. Waist deep in freezing water he induced his dogs to drag him to the firmer foothold of a passing ice-floe where his predicament was still precarious. Within living memory no one had ever been adrift on the ice in this bay, so there was no chance of his plight becoming known.

Grenfell had lost his warm clothing and a bitter blast was blowing. The only way to live through the night was to kill some of his dogs and wrap himself in their skins. With considerable difficulty he killed three, wondering if he drifted into the open sea, whether he should not do the same to himself rather than die by inches.

Having piled up the carcasses of the dead dogs to make a wind-break he took off his icy soaking clothes and wrung them, then unravelled a rope and used the hemp as oakum socks for his boots. He bound the frozen legs of his dead dogs together and made them into a flagpole, and tore off his shirt and flew it as a flag of distress. He now thought that he could detect men under the cliffs and a boat putting out. He laughed at the folly of expecting human

beings in so remote a spot. He felt that he could not hold out for another twenty-four hours, but he had no sensation of fear.

As he was trying to make a piece of ice serve as a burning-glass to illuminate some wet matches, his snow-blinded eyes suddenly caught the gleam of an oar. A boat drew alongside. He had been seen the previous night and his rescuers had threaded the ice-blocks of an angry sea to save him. Every soul in the nearest village shook his frost-bitten hand as he landed "looking a weird object, tied up in rags, stuffed out with oakum and wrapped in bloody dog-skins."

There was a certain type of man in the north whose friendship Grenfell did not cultivate for he believed that such were taking unfair advantage of their knowledge that hereabouts was the graveyard of the Atlantic. As many as forty ships had been lost here in a single gale. Five vessels had been driven into each other on the rocks at one time.

Sailing north one day, Grenfell's hospital ship picked up three castaways, the crew of a ship whose owner the doctor suspected. According to them their vessel had run on a shoal and was wrecked. By now Grenfell had assumed many other duties than that of a medical missionary in these parts. As Lloyd's agent he turned about and went to inspect the wreck whereupon the rescued skipper asked leave to search her for something he had left behind.

"Certainly not," said Grenfell, still suspicious.

Yet just before sunrise the three were caught attempting to row aboard and were ordered back. They returned full of bluff but looking very uneasy. Grenfell found a perfectly round hole in the wreck with no splinters inside. Such a hole could not have been made by a rock. In such circumstances he thought it wise to act swiftly. Calling late on the owner he woke him up. By midnight he had purchased the salvaged wreck for—half a dollar!

Grenfell records with glee that he can still see the look in the eye of the seller as he doled out the change. That the owner, a self-made man, as keen as a ferret in a business deal, should have parted with the ship for that absurd price, was an admission that he had intended to murder her for her insurance.

Such experiences showed the necessity of somebody undertaking to provide this desolate coast with a repairing-dock; and although this provision could hardly be termed the work of a medical missionary any more than innumerable other things done by Grenfell, he undertook the task of providing it, with the result that not only sailors' lives but their ships were also saved.



As the years passed Grenfell became more and more useful to the British and Newfoundland governments. He was given the powers of a magistrate, and these he exercised with wide discretion. King Edward the Seventh once asked him how he provided himself with police on a coast where there were none officially enrolled. He replied that usually he swore in a man from an American university to act as a temporary loyal servant of His Majesty.

The greatest adventure of his life happened when he was middle-aged. He was returning from England to his duties when he became interested in a tall girl in black, the most beautiful woman on the *Mauretania*.

For a day or two he debated whether he should take the risk. One day he went up to her and proposed marriage. Her reply was that he did not even know her name. This was true but he skilfully avoided it by saying, "That is not the issue. The only thing that interests me is—what your name is going to be."

It was a clever reply addressed to a girl who years ago when asked to go and hear a medical missionary talk about Labrador had refused in no unmeasured terms. He says that the genius of his family was always at its best on the rolling wave and on this occasion "it pleased God to add another naval victory to our annals." She was the daughter of the leader of the Chicago Bar with a beautiful home near Lake Michigan.

As Lady Grenfell she has helped her husband develop his work of civilizing Labrador which, because of their efforts, is now rapidly coming into its own.

# "HOLY WAR" IN PERSIA

By

DENIS CLARK

SOME years before the Great War, Persia, land of ancient and languid chivalry, looked upon Britain as her first friend and protector. Their cause was a common one against Imperialistic Russia, though that of Persia was urgent and embittered by present exploitation and impending invasion while the British policy was but a part of that general dog-in-the-manger distrust of Russian expansion denoted by that popular chorus: "The Rooshans shall not 'ave Con-stan-ti-nople." The famed Shah of Persia, Mussafur u'Din, whose father had visited the Great White Queen, was willing to betray his country to these grasping Tartars in return for gold, and would have done so had not the British *chargé d'affaires* tempered his autocratic powers by ingeniously assisting his subjects towards a "Constitution." He did this by allowing certain rebelliously democratic merchants to use his residency's gardens as a sanctuary (by ancient and modern privilege foreign legations, some venerable trees, and antique cannon, together with mosques, shrines, royal stables, and telegraph offices were all respected as sanctuaries) where they stayed, their stores remorselessly closed, to the number of twelve thousand, until the frantic shah granted their demands. "This constitution, is it to eat or to wear?" asked one of the delighted and triumphant rebels as he rushed forth to enjoy the first attempt at democratic government that his country had known.

But one year later the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 was signed, by which poor Persia was neatly divided into zones of interested influence. Her shah fell completely under Russian control and Russian troops gained a foothold on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea, remaining there. Persia lost her trust in Britain together with her new and prized constitution, while her hatred for Russia impotently swelled. It was at this time, when she lay friendless between the reiving ambitions of the Russian, British and Turkish Empires, that a young man came to her shores as representative of another great power of which she had scarcely heard. Young Wassmuss was appointed to Bushire as consul for the German people.

Wassmuss was twenty-six when he first came to Persia in 1909. Previously he had been in his country's consular service in Madagascar, and it is possible that there, where Darius had conquered and civilized, he found the seeds of interest and sympathy with the Persian race and its traditions which were to flower in his single-handed undertaking during the World War. To a German, a romantic intellectual such as Wassmuss, there was tremendous appeal in this people of gracious antiquity, of splendid dress and manners, of vital and poetic speech. His enterprise, though it runs parallel with that of Lawrence of Arabia, seems to own a more tragic history even than his.

On his first appointment to Bushire he made himself unpopular among the consuls and officials by his over brusque assertion of German rights and dignity, but before long he was reappointed to Madagascar. When, after three years, he returned to Persia he was a changed man.

Persia may roughly, in shape alone, be compared to the Isle of Wight. Northward, in place of the Solent, her boundaries lie along Russia and the Caspian Sea, with Turkestan to the north-east. Her western boundary lies against Turkey and Arabia; to the east Afghanistan stands above Baluchistan. The Persian Gulf tilts up, washing her southern coast. Bushire, where Wassmuss returned once more as consul in 1913, stands at about two-thirds towards the landlocked end of the Persian Gulf.

A different and gentler Wassmuss came back from Madagascar, and one who now was a master of the Persian language. Instead of attending entertainments and European clubs, he spent a great deal of his time riding about the barren district of Tangistan to the south of Bushire, making friends with the tribesmen. He wore their dress of slashed camel-hair cloak with a little hat like a high Basque beret, worn a trifle to one side of the head, which gave to his short, broad figure a grave, new dignity, enhanced by his long hair and candid, searching eyes. The tribesmen respected him for his medical knowledge and skill with horses, but most of all for his own unaffected wisdom. So did he live and move among them until the outbreak of war in August 1914. Love for Persia and its people had grown in his heart, but at once he went back to Berlin to enlist.

The rulers of Germany knew as well as the British the full meaning of the word "*Jehad*." Could they but get the Caliph of Islam to declare a holy war against the Infidels, the whole Muslim east from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal would rise

against its British invaders, and the no less resentful followers of false gods, Hindus and placid Buddhists, might be expected to follow suit. Wassmuss was despatched back to Constantinople in company with two other Germans of Persian experience: Oskar von Niedermeyer and Schunemann. The plan was that of Enver Pasha, leader of the Young Turk movement. A *jeihad* would be declared in Constantinople and the other holy cities under the Turks. Egypt, Arabia, Turkey and Persia would become united (the Turkish ambitions, more Anglophil than Germanophil, were actually intent on expansion at Persia's expense) and a small company of Turks and Germans would pass unostentatiously through Persia to spread the fever in farthest Afghanistan. Up would rise the emir at his fortress in Kabul, encouraged by letters and presents from both kaiser and caliph. The war would be on the very threshold of India, fiery propaganda should be broadcast southward, and India herself in all her magnitude would rebel. English troops would have to be taken from France to maintain the empire, and so the opposition to the German advance westward would totter and give way. Victory would be in the grasp of the central powers.

The German mission was composed of Wassmuss and the two others, together with a band of hearty young pioneers from German East Africa. These colonials were found totally unsuitable for the delicate work in hand and were sent home from Aleppo, but not before they had shaken the foundation of the expedition and thoroughly upset Wassmuss. It was probably largely to reassure himself and the remainder of his party that he suggested they should make their way from Baghdad through that part of Persia which he knew so well, although it meant deviating from their direct route to Afghanistan. It was finally decided that Niedermeyer should go on with the main party to Kabul, while Wassmuss should go southward to rouse the tribes against the British. Schunemann went no farther than Kirmanshah just over the Persian border. Accordingly, at the beginning of February, 1915, Wassmuss and two Germans, Doktor Lenders and Bornsdorf set out.

At that time the reigning shah was a youth of little initiative and with no formed policy. The Persian people, goaded by the Russians and encouraged by a Russian defeat at Tabriz, had all but decided to join the Turks. But the Turks in their victorious advance indulged their taste for barbarities at the Persian expense, thereby killing all sympathy with their cause.

Wassmuss took ship down the Tigris. Forty miles below Kut al Amara he landed to enter Persia through the obscure passes of South Duristan, making for Dizful, city of Persian Arabs, the most ardent for the *jehad*. But close at hand ran the Anglo-Persian oil pipe-line, and the khans in its proximity had been well subsidized by the British. Wassmuss, undaunted, spread his gospel with success, and the British missed support from these friendly khans, which they badly needed against the neighbouring Arabs. Their forces suffered a defeat. It was the first victory of Wassmuss.

Beyond Dizful, at Shustar the British were informed of the Germans' presence and a party came to their lodging to capture them. They had escaped, and were not heard of again until they were a hundred miles south at Behbahan on the road to Shiraz. But here they were betrayed by a khan who invited them to his house and imprisoned them. Bornsdorf alone was warned of the trap and fled back to Baghdad. A messenger was sent to Bushire, and soon a British detachment was on its way, but when the officer entered the prisoners' locked room only Lenders was to be seen. Somehow Wassmuss had escaped again.

This second escape started the host of fabulous stories that grew up about Wassmuss, not only among the admiring Persians but among the apprehensive Britons too.

He was next heard of at Barazjar between Bushire and Shiraz, and a certain Captain Noel, a famous warrior, volunteered to put an end to his adventurings. He went forth on horseback alone, discovered his man's place of hiding, collected a little force and captured Wassmuss red-handed, inciting the tribesmen by pamphlet and word of mouth to turn out the British. Noel put Wassmuss under guard and ordered a policeman to bring him to Bushire next morning. That night the horse of Wassmuss fell sick and, with his guard's consent, every half-hour he visited its stable. Towards dawn the guard grew sleepy and at last omitted to accompany the captive. Suddenly Wassmuss was on his malingering charger's back and galloping off across country. So he escaped once more, and now the Persian hinterland openly declared itself for him. With an abortive gesture Noel put a great price upon his head, but this was cancelled from headquarters, and Noel was recalled to Bushire for his own safety.

Presently Wassmuss arrived among the Qashqai, most powerful of Persian tribes, riding through the dreadful "Cursed Range" of mountains, where he incited the chiefs and headmen to rise.

They were ready listeners, for the British had plotted against the overthrow of their chief, and Wassmuss spoke sweetly of the kaiser's sympathy and affection. By now the story was general in Persia that the mighty emperor had himself embraced the true faith of Islam. Wassmuss turned back towards Shiraz.

Shiraz is a beautiful, gardened city among barren, golden hills. He made his way to the gendarmerie, staffed with Swedes of pro-German sympathy, where he was received with applause, and installed himself to intrigue with the governor and surrounding khans. He preached of British perfidy and imminent defeat, finding ardent support in a party calling itself the "Fighters in the  *Jihad* ." With them he arranged that there should soon be warfare in the hinterland of the gulf, in the country of the Qashqais and against Shiraz.

Had it been in Wassmuss's mind to discover the British policy in Persia, he would have found that all their thoughts were centred upon the Tigris, up which their forces were slowly driving the Turks. But it was not his policy that their intentions should be recognized otherwise than turning inward upon Persian territory, and thus he betrayed the land he loved, for he told its people at a great meeting at Borazjar that the British were coming to overrun their country. He flattered their courage and prowess, and so at last it was decided that war should be declared. War should be declared against Bushire by a brave man with a flag, at dawn of the second day after the meeting, and at once an attack should be delivered.

At the appointed hour and trysting place Wassmuss waited among the palms, alone. By midday a few warriors arrived and presently sank into pleasant *siestas* under the cool green shade. From fury, Wassmuss passed to whistling Bach and philosophically reading, until almost at sundown appeared a great concourse which lacked only one notable chieftain's band to complete the army. When the sun sank the troops disbanded, but as they dispersed the missing khan arrived, made late by a search for errant sheep. He was now all eagerness for the fray and with his party galloped over the hill against Bushire, where he shot some Indian cavalymen before returning in triumph.

About the same time Wassmuss's propaganda reached a certain zealous mullah who at once declared a holy war at Makran and led the tribesmen against Chahbar in the neighbourhood of Bushire. In the battle a few British were killed but the tribesmen were driven off which, despite Wassmuss's assurances of their helplessness

brought them back to some respect for British might. However, at last, in late June, the general rising he had worked for occurred. A battle took place at Bushire between a thousand tribesmen and the British garrison, armed with an old field-gun and a machine-gun. Wassmuss went into action with his friends, exhorting them. After some desperate charges, led by the sheiks, the tribesmen fled.

Although it is recorded that among Persian charms there are certain that are ordained for the especial safety of fleeing generals, they should not be accounted an unvalorous race. Given a high cause, or oppression to overthrow, without doubt they would have fought as gallantly as any other race of whom a phlegmatic attendance on sudden disintegration, pride of a European army, was not expected. But now their ideals were too confused for so poetical a race, which perhaps account for the mild effects of their rising against the British.

They called on these alien troops to quit Bushire and, when they would not, pillaged about that city. The British were forced to obtain their supplies from the sea, but presently other vessels than supply ships came steaming up the gulf. H.M.S. *Juno*, *Pyramus*, *Lawrence* and *Dalhousie* cast anchor off Bushire and the Union Jack was hoisted above that city. Soon a landing-party set about cutting down the palm trees of those rebellious tribesmen who had gone against Bushire. At Dilbar many boats filled with armed men, covered by ships' great guns, forced a landing against the resisting warriors and a brisk little battle was fought. Shells from the warships began to fall among the palm groves held by the tribesmen, who fled, to open fire again at dawn of the next day, when they saw their trees still falling. Their shots were answered enthusiastically from the ships, which, owing to an error, now trained their heavy weapons on the groves where the British sailors were at work.

These the amazed tribesmen presently saw running for their lives, leaving many dead, all of which they confusedly credited to their own prowess and stratagem, though some numbers of them were slain when they returned to their forsaken, ravished groves. So was this held a very great victory for the Persian arms.

Shortly afterwards they triumphed again, for, encouraged by Wassmuss, the sheiks attacked Bushire in strength and, although the attackers were routed, in the dense morning mist that covered the low-lying land they ran headlong into a body of British cavalry, sent to cut off their retreat. These were taken utterly by surprise

and eighty were slain. Jubilant tales of the "Anglees" defeats spread all about Persia.

Now Wassmuss knew that his plans went well and that, as he had schemed, British troops, badly needed against the Turks to the north, were being diverted to Persia. On October 10, 1915, the British residents in Shiraz were made prisoners and led away to captivity at Ahram, the palace of Zair Khidair, where they stayed till late in 1916 when they were exchanged. At Ahram, Wassmuss was said to have a "wireless" with which he conversed directly with the kaiser at Berlin. It was a most useful instrument, for the kaiser meted out praise and blame as they were deserved by the surrounding chiefs, keeping them in a suitable state of loyal humility. Actually it was nothing more than an impressive collection of wires and electric light bulbs which received or vouchsafed just what emanated from Wassmuss's own head.

Meanwhile, on April 29, 1916, Townsend had surrendered at Kut: the most terrible blow that British prestige had yet suffered in the east. Two million pounds, the retreat of the whole force to its base, and the surrender of its guns, offered by the British Government as terms, were refused by Enver Pasha, and twelve thousand British and Indian troops were made prisoners. Von der Goltz, the German Field-Marshal, made his headquarters at Baghdad, and the British cause in the east tottered. Things were in the balance. Dissension arose between the Germans and Turks, who entered Persia in considerable strength, instead of consolidating their position on the Tigris. They drove back the Russians, but their line lengthened and dwindled even as, in Gallipoli, the British were forced to retreat. In Iraq the Turks were forced from Baghdad by General Maude and from Hamadan in north-west Persia by the reinforced Russians. The Persian tribesmen preyed upon their broken column.

The British hold on Persia began to tighten. Sykes formed the South Persian Rifles, Dyer guarded Persian Baluchistan, Dunsterville (Kipling's hero of "Stalky and Co.") advanced against those in the forests on the west of the Caspian. Niedermeyer, after frightful privations, had crossed the deserts to Afghanistan and reached Kabul, but his mission was fruitless, and he with his party returned at length to Germany, leaving Wassmuss alone in Persia.

With the powerful chiefs of the Qashqais and the men of Kazerun, Wassmuss joined battle with the South Persian Rifles in the country north of Shiraz. The new and hastily formed regiment was a polyglot assembly of Persian tribesmen with British



officers. They were surprised by the sheiks in the snow-covered mountains, an officer was killed, and they fled in confusion. High prestige and great optimism came to the men of Kazerun and Qashgai.

Wassmuss was joined at this time by another German, Spiller, a refugee from Turkestan, who stayed with him till the end; the first of his own countrymen that he had seen since Bornsdorf fled in 1915. The British, bitterly vengeful, sought for him, forcing him constantly to be on the move. He was attacked by robbers and wounded, so that for the rest of his life he went lame. His friend, Saulat ud Dawla, chief of the Qashqais, led his men against the British but was defeated, and Wassmuss's only gain was a mutiny engineered among the South Persia Rifles. Another attack was made on Shiraz, but this, too, failed, and at last at Firuzabad Saulat ud Dawla was utterly broken by Sykes's forces. Wassmuss retreated to the hinterland, where he remained until the British sent news to him of the signing of the Armistice. They demanded that he should give himself up at Bushire, promising to repatriate him without penalty. He refused, declaring that his capture would be a violation of Persian neutrality.

Sadly Wassmuss and Spiller parted from their friends. He expressed great sorrow that he had not brought them victory or gain. Then, with the assistance of the Kazerun chief, Nasr Diwan, himself a fugitive, they set out to cross into Turkey. Wassmuss abandoned his Persian clothing and, in European dress, gave himself out to be a Mr. Witt of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. With the connivance of his friends he was well on his road to escape when, in March of 1919, he indiscreetly attended a feast given by one of his old allies, a chief at Kashan. An Armenian telegraphist informed the British and he was arrested at Gum on the Persian border.

At Tehran, partly through malice, partly through misunderstanding, Wassmuss was shockingly treated: beaten by Indian soldiers and dragged through the mud on his back to the legation office. He lay, and was mocked while they told him their plans for his disposal. At Kaswin somehow he escaped and, after a taxi-driver had erroneously all but delivered him back into captivity, came at last to the German Legation. In the autumn he was brought to British-occupied Cologne where he was set free.

Wassmuss went back to his native Saxony and married. He was appointed head of the Eastern Department in Berlin, where he worked for two years. But remorse for the evil he had brought

upon his friends never ceased to trouble him, aggravated by a claim for a large sum which the sheiks said he had promised them for their help. He called on his government to make settlement to the extent of five thousand pounds. But how could Germany pay her partners in defeat, when her conquerers demanded far more than she could find?

Wassmuss applied for leave and arrived at Bushire, where he won consent from the British authorities to hold a great meeting of the sheiks. He propounded a plan, suggested by a friend, a German agricultural expert. He would settle in the Tangistan country and farm it, paying the proceeds towards his debt of honour. The British were not encouraging. The German Government tried to dissuade him, at last agreeing to pay the sum he had asked. He took it, but held to his plan. Modern implements and farm machinery were imported, and the sheiks agreed to wait for their money to come from the farm's prosperity.

But seven years passed and in spite of all his efforts it did not prosper. The sheiks had grown suspicious of white men, ceased to support him, finally deliberately worked against him. Suddenly one day they arrived in force, demanding, despite their former agreement, instant and full settlement of the debt. They denied any former acceptance of his plan. He was declared bankrupt. Discredited, vanquished in the courts, dishonoured, he left for Berlin in April, 1931.

Disappointment and treachery broke his heart. He fell ill that November and, as he lay dying, learnt that in the High Court judgment had finally been given for him against those who had been his friends. That he had for comfort, he who had worked and risked so much to make the affairs of his own country and of that other that he loved run together towards victory.

# TEN THOUSAND MILES ON HORSEBACK

By

H. F. TSCHIFFELY

*The following extract is taken from the adventures of A. P. Tschiffely, who travelled on horseback from Buenos Aires to New York with his two famous horses, Gato, and Mancha. At this point of his journey he is accompanied by a Mr. W. who insisted on attempting the adventure of crossing the Andes on horseback. Mr. W. was so badly bitten by mosquitoes that he caused Mr. Tschiffely serious alarm.*

**A**FTER Limatambo our way lay through beautiful wooded valleys with marvellous and exuberant vegetation; veritable paradise for naturalists. The trail passed under enormous trees or again through regular forests of bamboo, and the rocks along the rushing and foaming streams were overhung with many varieties of delicate ferns. On some rocks there were big trees with peculiar roots hanging down like huge snakes, and on these roots grew big brown knobs that resembled enormous potatoes.

Sometimes we were winding our way through narrow and deep valleys, with walls of rock that seemed to reach the clouds on either side, and then again we had to zig-zag up a rough trail, stumbling, scrambling and slipping. Men and beasts were dripping with perspiration, and every now and again we had to halt to recover our breath, and so we slowly climbed higher and higher.

We always went along in single file, and one day, whilst we were slowly moving along one of those giddy trails, Gato stepped too near the edge, and some loose rocks gave way under his hind leg. He lost his footing and shot over the side and went sliding towards the edge of a deep precipice. For a moment I watched in horror, and then the miracle happened. A solitary sturdy tree stopped his slide towards certain death, and once the horse had bumped against the tree he had enough sense not to attempt to move. I took off my spurs and climbed down towards him, and as soon as I had reached the trembling animal I began to unsaddle him with the utmost care, for should he move and fall, I would at

least save my few precious belongings. Poor Gato had scented danger, and was pitifully neighing to his companion, who was above in safety. It was not his usual neigh—it had in it a note of desperation and fear.

Once unsaddled, I made sure that he could not move from the spot until preparations were made to assist him from above. When all was ready the horse was hauled back to safety, but had it not been for the fact that Gato spread out his forelegs like a frog, he would have overbalanced backwards, and the chances were that he would have swept me with him, for I was guiding the salvage operations from below. My heart was palpitating so violently that I thought it would burst, but once both of us were safely back on the trail that now looked like a paradise to me, I looked through the saddle bags to see if there was a drop left to celebrate the miraculous escape; however, we were out of luck in that line and had to wait until we came to a spring, where we washed down the fright.

After crossing the Apurmac River we came to the roughest and most broken country imaginable. Little bridges spanned deep canyons and ravines, and the trail led over high passes and through deep gorges and winding valleys. The condition of my friend was getting worse every day, and he was no longer able to use his hands. The infections on his face had made shaving impossible, and so his beard had grown considerably. The matter that oozed out of his running sores had dried and mixed with his now stubby beard, making his appearance anything but attractive, to say the least.

Some of the inclines we had to climb were almost heart-breaking, and we had to be very cautious not to overstrain our animals.

In a beautiful and fertile mountain valley we rested in a picturesque village, and there my companion was obliged to change his mules. The cunning people asked exorbitant prices, for they knew that he would either have to pay what they demanded or else go on foot. After having tried to cure his infections and having chased around for mules for five days we were finally ready to push on.

When we got eventually to Ayacucho a doctor immediately attended to my friend, and high time it was, for the flesh of his hands had positively begun to rot. From here, Mr. W. could reach the railway terminus by automobile, and the train would take him over the last range down to Lima. The best hotel in the town was dirty and lacking in many respects, but we were

happy to be in it, and once the animals had been accommodated and fed we sat down to a hearty meal, and shortly after we were making up for some of our lost sleep.

The second range of the Andes was behind us now, and the horses were in such excellent condition that I had no doubt that only an accident could prevent us from reaching Lima and the Pacific Ocean.

After a few days Mr. W. was well enough to travel without running a risk, and accordingly he arranged to leave on a lorry that was about to make the trip to the railway terminus.

He had hardly left when heavy rains began to pour down, and when I met him again some three years later, he told me that his adventures had by no means come to an end, for the lorry was held up owing to landslides, and farther along some bridges had been washed away and he had to cross over two rivers in baskets hung on cables. Finally he arrived in Lima, and after two months his wounds had healed completely, leaving only a few scars to remind him of his joy ride across one of the Andean ranges.

Landslides and swollen rivers made it impossible to follow the road and compelled me to make a large detour over the mountains to the west. Natives who knew these regions advised me to take a guide, for alone I should have difficulty in finding the direction among the numerous little Indian footpaths.

With the mayor's assistance I found an Indian in a village who agreed to come with me, but unfortunately the man could neither speak nor understand Spanish. I bought some provisions, and without losing time started out, the guide, like most Indians, preferring to go on foot, and even when the horses went at a trot he kept up with us with ease. After some time he led us into very rough country, and often he made a sign to me to go ahead, and then he took a short cut, and later I found him sitting somewhere far ahead, chewing coca whilst waiting for us.

We had crossed some giddy and wobbly hanging bridges before, but here we came to the worst I had ever seen or ever wish to see again. Even without horses the crossing of such bridges is apt to make anybody feel cold ripples running down the back, and, in fact, many people have to be blindfolded and strapped on stretchers to be carried across. Spanning a wild river the bridge looked like a long, thin hammock swung high up from one rock to another. Bits of rope, wire and fibre held the rickety structure together, and the floor was made of sticks laid crosswise and

covered with some coarse fibre matting to give a foothold and to prevent slipping that would inevitably prove fatal. The width of this extraordinary piece of engineering was no more than four feet, and its length must have been roughly one hundred and fifty yards. In the middle the thing sagged down like a slack rope.

I went to examine it closely, and the very sight of it made me feel giddy, and the thought of what might easily happen produced a feeling in my stomach as if I had swallowed a block of ice. For a while I hesitated, and then I decided to chance it, for there was no other alternative but to return to Ayacucho and there wait for the dry season. I unsaddled the horses, and giving the Indian the lead-line I made signs to him to go ahead with Mancha first. Knowing the horse well, I caught him by the tail and walked behind talking to him to keep him quiet. When we stepped on the bridge he hesitated for a moment, then he sniffed the matting with suspicion, and after examining the strange surroundings he listened to me and cautiously advanced. As we approached the deep sag in the middle, the bridge began to sway horribly, and for a moment I was afraid the horse would try to turn back, which would have been the end of him; but no, he had merely stopped to wait until the swinging motion was less, and then he moved on again. I was nearly choking with excitement, but kept on talking to him and patting his haunches, an attention of which he was very fond. Once we started upwards after having crossed the middle, even the horse seemed to realize that we had passed the worst part, for now he began to hurry towards safety. His weight shook the bridge so much that I had to catch hold of the wires on the sides to keep my balance. Gato, when his turn came, seeing his companion on the other side, gave less trouble and crossed over as steadily as if he were walking along a trail. Once the horses were safely on the other side we carried over the packs and saddles, and when we came to an Indian hut where "chicha" and other native beverages were sold we had an extra long drink to celebrate our successful crossing, whilst the horses quietly grazed as if they had accomplished nothing out of the way.

Torrential rains began to pour down, and the mountain trails were soon converted into rushing streams that carried earth and loose stones with them, and often we had to wait until the downpour ceased before we could proceed.

The guide pointed towards a mountain side that towered up into the sky like a wall, and it seemed to me that he tried to make me understand that we would have to climb up there, but as

this looked like an impossibility to me I thought I must be misunderstanding him. Much to my surprise our path led straight towards this formidable mountain side, and presently we started up a neck-breaking path which had been partly hewn and partly worn out of the rocky wall. It was so steep and slippery that at first I considered it a physical impossibility for horses to climb up there, and when we finally came to the top I saw that another similar obstacle was ahead of us. A traveller soon gets used to such disappointments in the Andes, for often, after having reached what one thought would be the end of a long and weary climb, one sees another ahead, and frequently one has by no means finished with the eternal zig-zags even when the second has been surmounted.

The Indians in these parts may appear to be sullen, but yet I found them kind and hospitable. I shall always remember how well a solitary woman treated us when we arrived at her hut. Her husband was away, and so she was left alone with the children. She prepared food for us, and in return I gave her and the children some chocolate, for the good woman refused to accept money. When daylight permitted we were glad to be off again, for it was bitterly cold, and my fingers were stiff and aching.

I was hoping that the clouds and fogs would lift towards noon, but this did not happen, and as time went on it became darker and darker. Towards evening thunder began to rumble in the distance, and suddenly a furious storm began to rage around us. The Indian, who was carrying our small food supply on his back, hurried ahead, and when we found an overhanging rock we took shelter under it. The rain poured down in such torrents that I was thankful not to be on a slope or in one of those trails in a hollow.

When the storm had passed the Indian left me, and, thinking he had merely gone to see what the weather was likely to do, I sat down to wait for him. After about a quarter of an hour I began to wonder what was keeping the man away for so long, and went to look for him, but although I searched in every direction and called, there was no sign of him. It was already dusk and still he did not appear, so I unsaddled and prepared to spend the night under the rock where we had taken refuge during the storm. Obviously the cunning Indian had returned towards home, taking with him all my food supplies, and as I had paid him in advance he must have thought it foolish to face further hardships, especially during an abnormally severe rainy season.

This was by no means the first time I had been in similar

situations, and so I settled down to make the best of it until dawn would permit us to continue.

In the evening I sighted a small settlement on a slope, and when I arrived there the *alcalde* (alderman) told me I was in Paucara, and in spite of not being any the wiser for this piece of information, I was glad to be there, for at least there were hopes of getting something to eat. The Indian *alcalde* gave me quarters in an empty hut next to his, and after a while brought me a steaming plate of barley soup and a bundle of straw for the horses.

At sunrise the *alcalde* put me on a trail, informing me that by following it I would hit the "Mejorada," which is the terminus of the Central Peruvian Railroad. More than once I thought I must have gone the wrong way, for evening was approaching, and still I could see no railway line. Rounding a bend my fears were dispelled, for far below us, in a green valley, I saw a thin line, like a black thread that wound and twisted along the foot of the mountain. We were safe, for this must be a railroad, a thing I had not seen for a long, long time.

From the railway terminus, going was easy to Huancayo, the first passably decent place we had struck for a long time.

This little town is noted for its Indian market, which is held every Sunday, and which is probably the most important and busy of its kind in the whole of South America. On Saturday afternoon, and early on Sunday morning, Indians come flocking into town from far and near. Pottery, leather goods, hand-woven blankets, dyes, grain, cleverly carved and painted calabashes, herbs, etc., are sold at low prices, provided the buyer knows how to barter with the thrifty vendors. Up to thirty thousand people gather weekly in this town, and nowhere else have I seen such a busy and colourful Indian market.

I am certain that the horses enjoyed their stay in Huancayo as much as I did, and I was sorry when I had to take them out of their alfalfa field. It would not take us long now to cross the last mountain range.

Recent landslides again forced me to make a large detour, but luckily a fair trail led towards Tarma, a charming little town in a beautiful fertile valley where the climate is one of eternal spring. A very good road connects Tarma with Oroya where the Cerro de Pasco Mining Corporation has its smelting plant. I followed this winding road for a few miles, and then took a short cut over a mountain to save time and distance.

The mining corporation has a very good hotel in Oroya, and the



officials did everything to make me comfortable. Near the smelter the Americans have even made a golf links.

I visited the smelters, and next day continued over the mountains to another American-operated mine, where I was again treated with great kindness. The following day we crossed over the Ticlio, the highest point we reached in the third Andean range, some sixteen thousand five hundred feet above the sea.

In two days we were down in the hot plains near the Pacific coast. The sudden change of atmospheric pressure affected my hearing, for my ears were humming and buzzing, and I constantly heard noises like the ringing of bells.

Having no other change with me, I was still wearing my heavy leather clothes which made me feel the heat doubly. My face was so badly chapped with the cold winds of the high regions that I had not been able to shave for some days, and my appearance was such that even the street urchins on the outskirts of Lima shouted "bandolero" after me. The three of us were covered with dust, and perspiration fairly dripped off us, so I could hardly blame the guttersnipes.

In the morning I had telephonically advised the Argentine minister that I would arrive in the capital at four p.m., but as I had timed it badly I was in the centre of the town over one hour before time. I dismounted in front of an hotel in the centre of the town, where we had arranged to meet. Soon a small crowd collected around us, and presently a policeman elbowed his way through the bystanders to see what was happening, and when he saw me he stared as if he were looking at the Wild Man of Borneo. When I explained who I was he gave me a broad smile, and kindly offered to look after the horses whilst I went into the hotel to see if anybody had arrived. When I walked into the lobby, the employees' looks were real studies, for they had probably never seen such a rough-looking specimen of humanity before.

I suddenly remembered that I still had my guns on me, and when I saw that nobody was there to greet me I thought it would be entertaining to have a little joke to pass away time. It was obvious that nobody suspected who I was, and so I walked to the room-clerk's desk and asked him for a room with a bath, but instead of answering he rushed away to consult with the manager, and I was not at all surprised when he returned and very apologetically informed me that all the rooms were occupied but that there was a quite good hotel not far from there.

Instead of leaving I returned to the lobby where I sat down and

ordered a bottle of beer, and as they could not very well tell me that they had finished their stock, the waiter reluctantly placed a bottle and glass before me and quickly retired to the place where he had stood before, acting something like a performing dog running back to his stool after having gone through his repertoire of tricks.

After some time the Argentine minister, accompanied by a few prominent men and friends, arrived, and when the hotel people saw that they had come to greet me, they looked as embarrassed as if they had suddenly lost their trousers. An Argentine sportsman who owned several racehorses immediately offered me his stables, and soon after Mancha and Gato were trying to make up for what they had missed in the mountains.

I bought myself some suitable clothes for city wear, and next morning, after having bathed and shaved, and generally "dolled up," I sat down at my table to have breakfast. My appearance was now so different that the waiter asked me kindly to move to another table, telling me that the one I was sitting at was reserved for "the Argentine rider."

The first day's ride from Lima was to take me to Ancon, some twenty odd miles. Knowing that I would find no fodder there I had sent a bale of hay ahead by train, for a railway connects this little bathing resort with the capital. About half-way I was stopped by a soldier of the *guardia civil* who demanded to see my licence for firearms, a document I did not possess. He very politely asked me to accompany him to the local headquarters where I explained to the *capitan* who I was, and this gentleman issued me a permit in order to prevent my being held up again.

This little incident proved to be a blessing in disguise, for the officer informed me that a river I had to cross a little farther ahead was high and therefore dangerous, and the *capitan* kindly sent a soldier with me to show the best place to cross. I never minded swimming rivers, but when I had to do this right alongside railway bridges that are impossible to cross with horses, I was none too pleased. If it was possible to swim the horses near the bridge I usually unsaddled the animals and carried everything over on foot, walking on the sleepers, and thus saving myself the trouble of having to wrap everything up in a waterproof sheet.

A few miles before we reached Ancon we entered the first sandy desert. Near here the last battle between Chili and Peru was fought, and the dead were buried in this stretch of desert where they fell. In time the winds shifted the sand, exposing a mass of skulls and

bones. What a resting place for those who gave their lives for their country!

It was a good thing that I had sent some hay ahead, for otherwise the horses would have had to pass another night on empty stomachs. Water is very scarce in many places along the Peruvian coast, and even in this fashionable bathing resort it is sold at ten centavos a tin.

Contrary to the practice of most travellers in dry regions, I carried no water. For my own use I had a flask of brandy, and another filled with lemon juice mixed with a little salt. This concoction was very stimulating but tasted so bad that I was never tempted to drink much at a time. As for the horses, I calculated that the energy wasted by them in carrying water would be greater than the actual benefit derived from drinking it, so they only drank when we came to a river or some village.

After leaving Ancon we travelled over high sand dunes, and at eventide, in a fertile plain, we arrived at a big hacienda belonging to a Chinaman, whose hospitality I shall never forget. The next day's trip being a long one we started long before daybreak. When I saddled up I thought my saddle-bags were rather heavier than usual, and later I found out that my kind host had filled them with all sorts of good things during the night.

The first rays of dawn found us among sand dunes where the horses sank deep into the soft sand that had been blown about by the wind until it appeared like ripples on a lake. The imposing silence was broken only by the rolling of the waves that sounded like the snoring of some sleeping giant. The wind almost immediately covered our tracks, and soon the terrible heat rose in waves, making breathing uncomfortable. In some places I could follow the coast, riding along the wet sand, where I made the horses go at a fast trot or even at a slow gallop, for I knew that this would be impossible once the sun rose higher; and time was very precious.

In most of the coastal villages I slept in the police stations, when there were any, and the horses spent the nights in the prison yards, which are surrounded by high adobe walls. Hardly any of these settlements have hotels or inns, and if there happened to be a hut masquerading under the name, it usually lacked a safe place where I could keep the horses. If I was lucky enough to find the prison empty, the *jefe de policia* gave me the keys to the place. Thus I could lock up my things and then go to see if there was any fodder to be found, and whilst I took the animals

to water, often at some distance from the place, my belongings were relatively safe.

Still following the hot, sandy coast, we came to a large sugar plantation, not far from which stands the fortress of Paramonga that was built by the ancient Chimu Indians.

From Paramonga north there is a vast desert, close on a hundred miles from one river to the next, and as there is no water to be found there I was obliged to make the crossing in one journey. For this reason I had to wait for the full moon before I could, with a certain degree of safety, attempt this long ride.

There was an outbreak of bubonic plague whilst I was there, and quite a number of plantation workers died, whilst many more were ill. The authorities raided their filthy quarters, and it was a pathetic yet amusing sight to see their owners howling and wailing as they walked behind their filthy belongings which were being carted out to be burnt, together with some ancient mummies that had been discovered near there in an old burial ground. I took every precaution against the horrible disease and was particularly careful never to lie down to rest unless I had previously sprinkled my bed with insect powder, for fleas and similar pests transmit the germs of bubonic plague.

After four days' waiting I was ready to start, and as I did not intend to carry water for the horses, I was careful not to give them anything to drink the day before we left, for I wanted them to be thirsty and therefore not likely to refuse a good drink immediately before starting out. For myself I packed two bottles of lemon juice in the sandle-bags, and the only food I took with me were a few pieces of chocolate that had been in my pack for some days. Towards evening we were ready, and when the sun was setting we crossed the river, on the other side of which the rolling desert starts. I waited until the horses had finished their drink, and after they had pawed and played with the cool water I mounted, and soon we were on the soft and still hot sands that made a peculiar hissing sound under the hoofs of the animals. The indescribable colours of a tropical sunset were reflected on the glittering waves of the ocean, and the old Indian fortress assumed a tint of gold. Even the inhospitable sandy wastes had changed their dread and desolate appearance, for now the sand dunes and undulations were one mass of colour, from golden brown to dark purple, according to light and shadows. A few belated sea birds were hurriedly flying towards their distant roosting places on some rocky island; everything seemed to be different now, except the

regular, eternal rolling of the breakers on the shore. No sooner had the last clouds ceased to glow like fading beacon fires than darkness set in, and after a while the moon rose over the mountain ranges in the far east, slowly, majestically; and more than welcome to me.

The sensation of riding on soft sand is a peculiar one at first, until the body becomes used to the peculiar springless motion of the horse. Knowing that such conditions mean a great strain on the animal I could not help moving in the saddle, uselessly endeavouring to assist my mount. We were twisting and winding our way through among high sand dunes and, whenever it was possible, I guided the animals down to the wet sand on the beach where I would urge them into a slow gallop. Often we came to rocky places or to land points which stretched far out, and thus I was forced to make a detour inland again, frequently for considerable distances. For the first few hours I observed everything around me and admired the brilliance of the moon that made the ocean glitter like silver, and gave the often strange sand formations a ghostly appearance. Soon even all this became monotonous to me, and every time I stopped to rest the horses for a while or to adjust the saddles, I lit a cigarette to help pass the time away. Shortly before dawn I had to halt for quite a long time, for the moon had gone down behind some clouds and we were left in darkness; it would not have been wise to continue lest I should take the wrong direction or lead the horses into places where the sand is so soft that they would sink in up to their bellies.

My instinct for finding the direction had developed to a notable degree by this time, probably because I had not very much to think about besides keeping the horses' noses facing the right way, but even when I knew exactly which way to go, fogs or darkness on several occasions made me think it wiser to wait until I could see.

The first rays of the morning sun were hot, and I rightly anticipated that the day was going to be a "scorcher." The horses plodded along as if they realized that they were in the midst of a serious test, and when it was about one hour after noon I noticed that they lifted their heads and sniffed the air. Immediately after they hurried their steps, and I believe they would have broken into a gallop if I had permitted them to do so. I was wondering why the horses were so keen to hurry along, and within an hour I knew the reason, for we arrived at the river, and I am certain that the animals scented water long before I could see it;

obviously Mancha and Gato still possessed the instincts of the wild horse.

It had taken us exactly twenty hours to cross the desert, and I have no desire ever to make another such ride.

After all these trying journeys I rested for two days, for there was plenty of grass for the horses, and I, for a change was able to even enjoy a few decent meals again.

One evening I thought I would pass a couple of hours away by going to see some moving pictures which were announced for that night. The *teatro* was merely a large shed with a tin roof, and the films shown were old and worn out, but yet the audience seemed delighted with the show. All of a sudden everybody made a rush for the door; there were a few shrieks from women, and the whole place shook. Before I had even time to think what was happening the place was empty, only myself and two women who had fainted remaining there. Even then I could not make out what had happened, but when I went outside I was told there had been an earthquake. I had been under the impression that the trampling and rushing crowd had shaken up the place. Luckily nobody was hurt in that stampede for the open, but a few had sustained minor bruises and knocks and the rest had come out of it with only a good fright. No one seemingly keen on going back, the management announced the show as having terminated; much to my surprise nobody protested or asked for "money back."

Fording some of the wide and usually slow-flowing rivers was not without its dangers, treacherous quicksands lurking where one least expects to find them. If anybody happened to live near a river I had to ford, I always offered a good reward if he were willing to show me the best place where to cross, but often I had to try my luck alone.

Once we came to a river that had a very bad reputation for quicksands, and so I rode upstream until I came to a hut where a fisherman lived. He was willing to help me across. He had a pony which, he told me, served to drag his net through the shallow water along the beach. Mounted on this animal he came to show me the way, but he only did this after having received five *soles* (Peruvian standard currency) in advance for his services. We had nearly reached the other side of the shallow but wide river when suddenly his pony's hindlegs sank into the sand. Knowing what this meant, I hurried my horses along, made a semi-circle around my guide, and was fortunate enough to reach the dry shore. Without losing a moment, I untied the lasso I always had handy,

and then cautiously waded back to where the man was still sitting on his animal, which was sinking deeper and deeper. As soon as I had thrown him the lasso he put it around the pony's neck; then jumped off and came towards me, all the time holding on to the lasso in case he also should sink in.

Continuing our difficult journey through hot sandy wastes, we entered the fertile Chicama valley where a German company cultivates sugar-cane, cotton, etc. This is probably the best that Peru can show in agricultural enterprise, and I appreciated sleeping in decent quarters once more, eating good food and tasting a bottle of cold imported beer. As in the regions of Lake Titicaca, I was on several occasions taken for a Chilean spy along the coast of Peru, and once or twice things looked distinctly ugly for me. What on earth a spy might be looking for in these God-forsaken places, I do not know, but when one considers the ignorance of the people there, one must be surprised at nothing.

The river Santa was the one that gave me most trouble. At the time it was in full flood, and the people thought it would be impossible to swim the horses across, the wide, swift river. However, I knew the animals could perform the feat, and as I had no intention of waiting for an indefinite period for it to go down I decided to make the attempt. Natives strongly advised me not to be foolish, for they warned me that the river was very tricky and that if I missed a certain place there was no other chance to land the horses and they would be carried down to the sea.

I heard so many terrible things about the Rio Santa that I went to have a look at it. About half an hour's ride through a veritable jungle, flooded by the waters of the river, brought me to my destination.

I must admit that I did not like the look of things, for not only was the other bank far away, but the mass of water came down with a roar, boiling, seething and tumbling, carrying with it branches and trees, besides which, as some friends who accompanied me explained, there were several rocks just below the surface, and if a horse swam over any of them he would be ripped to pieces. In places where two currents met there were large whirlpools, and it did not take me long to realize that it would be very dangerous to make the attempt unless one happened to be thoroughly acquainted with every detail of the river.

In normal times cattle are swum across by *chimbadores*, who thus earn their living, but when the waters are high nobody ever tries. When we had discussed the question my friends went to

look for the best of these men, to ask his opinion. After a long wait he arrived, and having carefully studied the river said that he had his doubts about any animal reaching the other bank, as there was only one possible landing-place, and if this was not reached the horses would be lost. I had been in some bad rivers before, and on every occasion my animals behaved admirably, so I did not hesitate to assure him that they were capable of performing the feat. Finally we arranged to meet next morning and to make the attempt.

The news spread like wildfire among the natives, and next morning a large number of curious people arrived to see the show, some on horses or mules, others on foot. When we reached the proposed scene of action some were already there waiting for us, and even on the rocks on the opposite bank others had taken position.

People cross some of these rivers in a basket slung on a cable, and the one across this river is the longest I have seen, ending on a high rock on the other bank. I unsaddled, and the things were taken across by means of the cable. When I thought everything was ready one of the local authorities, who had been very friendly with me, came up and bluntly told me he would not allow me to enter the river, for such a thing amounted to rank suicide, especially as I did not know the tricks and dangers of these wild waters.

I could already see myself returning a beaten man and waiting for days, or maybe even weeks, before being able to reach that other bank, and just then I saw the *chimbador* standing near. I offered him a good sum of money if he would swim my animals across, and to this nobody had any objection, for these men are wonderful swimmers and know every inch and trick of the river. At first he refused to consider my offer, but when I agreed that he could leave the horses if he saw that they could not reach the only landing-place and save himself he promised to try.

For a long time he studied the seething river, and sent a few men to different points upstream to signal should branches or trees come floating down. I advised him to mount on Mancha and to leave Gato to follow behind loose. The former would never let anyone but myself ride him on dry land without bucking, so we coaxed him into the water where the man mounted without trouble, and as soon as the "all clear" signal was given they started to wade out, and in a few moments the current swept the three downstream, Gato following close behind his companion.



The people on the bank had made bets as to whether or not the horses would cross, and I must admit I passed minutes that seemed hours, until at long last there was a loud cheer from many throats and both animals waded out on the other side nearly half a mile downstream. The Rio Santa had been conquered in full flood.

I crossed by the cable and continued the journey, but my adventures for the day were not yet over, for on reaching an hacienda where I intended to pass the night I found the peones (workers) in an uproar. Indians and mestizos were gesticulating in groups, and I heard that one had attempted to kill another. There being no doctor within miles, I was asked if I could do anything for the wounded man. I found him lying in a hut, fairly soaked in blood. He was obviously wounded deeply, and his lungs were damaged, for he was coughing up blood. I washed the wound, and as there was some laudanum in the medicine chest I gave him a solution of this to drink. The man who had attacked him was in a small hut that served as prison, and when I went to have a look at him I found him with both legs fixed in strong wooden stocks. He was an Indian, and with his long hair and savage looks was anything but attractive.

During the night my host came to call me, saying that the prisoner was attempting to escape. I hurriedly dressed, took my electric torch and a revolver, and went to see what was happening. When I approached the prison door a stone hit me in the chest, whereupon I made ready for rough work. Playing my torch into the hut, I saw the Indian with a dagger in his hand, and it was easy to see that he had dug around one of the posts that held down the stocks. The man was roaring like a wild beast, and it was obvious that he was ready to make a fight for freedom. The only thing to do was to disarm him and then make him safe for the night. Accordingly I picked up a board, and holding it in front of myself rushed at the man and kicked him so as to make him lie down, but he managed to injure my right hand slightly. As soon as he was down Indian men and women rushed at him, some kicking him, whilst others tore his hair. To make him safe he was taken out of the stocks and bound with a rope. I could hear him moaning and complaining, and when I came out in the morning he was still lying in the courtyard surrounded by Indians who had kept an eye on him throughout the night. He was still in the same position as when I had last seen him, and when I requested his guard to loosen the ropes a little they told me he was no longer

bound. When I examined the man I could not help feeling sorry for him, for the ropes had cut in deep and he was bleeding in several places. His eyes were bloodshot and he was more dead than alive, the only sign of life he gave being a faint moan every now and again.

I was glad when I was on my way again, and often wondered later what happened to both the assailant and the victim; I do not think I shall ever forget the Rio Santa.

# THE WOMAN WHO FOUGHT IN THE CRIMEAN WAR

*By*

T. V. BULEY

THE opening scene of any adventure story should be adventurous in its setting: bugles sounding as dawn breaks; the wash and kiss of the sea on the side of an outward bound ship; frowning mountains and dark forests of lost continents. This adventure has nothing of these—in fact it opens in the most unlikely place in the world—in the boudoir of a young Victorian lady of fashion, beloved daughter of rich and socially élite parents.

She sits in the luxurious heavily furnished room with her diary open in front of her and she thinks over her life. She has health, good looks, wealth, position and brains (a somewhat doubtful attribute for that time). She had had offers of marriage, socially she is a success, she has every reason to be proud of herself and yet—

"In my thirty-first year," wrote Florence Nightingale, "I see nothing desirable but death. Everything has been tried, foreign travel, kind friends, everything." And then a last despairing cry of utter frustration and boredom. "My God! What is to become of me?"

Three years later, when the guns were booming in the Crimea, when harassed cabinet ministers were vainly trying to shield themselves against her attacks, when the Queen of England herself was enquiring after her welfare, all the world was to know what had become of Florence Nightingale. But in the years that she made that entry in her diary she was gathering strength for her last desperate fight against conventions, against wealth, blind parental love, against the whole uselessness of her fashionable life.

Florence Nightingale and her elder sister, Parthenope, were in childhood given all the advantages of education, travel, and social contacts that their parents' position allowed. But when at length they took their rightful places in society it was plainly seen by the anxious Mrs. Nightingale that while Parthe took to this mode of life with enthusiasm, Florence—though her social success was no less—showed increasing restlessness.

"If only she would marry," was the burden of her cry. But Florence had no intention of marrying. Indeed, she at length openly declared her desire to follow a "career."

That in itself was bad enough, but when they learnt which particular career she desired to follow, her parents were horrified.

"If I should determine to study nursing and to devote my life to that profession, do you think it would be a dreadful thing?" Florence asked an eminent doctor—and there could be no doubt of his answer.

At that time there could scarcely have been a more disreputable occupation for women than nursing. The so-called hospital nurses were, almost without exception, women of immoral character, among whom sobriety was practically unknown. They were in general untrained and unfitted, or incapable of carrying out their duties. Among women such as these, the delicate and sensitive Florence Nightingale wished to take her place! No wonder that the idea was firmly quashed by her parents, and that she was forced once more into the social round.

Nevertheless, the idea that she was born for some purpose persisted with this most unusual product of the Victorian age. She managed to amass—almost surreptitiously—a vast amount of knowledge of medical reports, sanitary conditions, and the histories and organization of hospitals and institutions. The happiest time of her life was the three months she spent at Kaiserswerth on the Rhine, an institution where Protestant women of high ideals might train as nurses and gain much useful experience in social service generally.

During her training here, she was visited by the friends, who more than anyone else in her life, were to help her to achieve the astounding things that she did—these were Sydney Herbert and his wife.

In 1852, when Florence was thirty-two, she entered into the last phase of her struggle for freedom. Her aunt, Mrs. Smith, negotiated once more with her mother, with the result that she reported to her niece that Mrs. Nightingale had no objection to her daughter undertaking a "mission in life," but that she felt that a husband was necessary to protect her, and that, as a good mother, she felt bound to defend her daughter against doing anything that would, in her mind, prevent a husband from presenting himself.

Presumably, Florence Nightingale received the message with a snort of disdain, and pointed out with acidity that she was now in her thirties, and that the usual age of marriage for young ladies of

her generation was about eighteen. At all events, the reluctant parents gave way, and after further training in Paris, Florence Nightingale became the superintendent of an "Establishment for Gentlewomen During Illness," in Upper Harley Street.

Her work here lasted a year, and then came the great call—the call for which she had shaped her whole life. The Crimean War broke out. Less than a week after the English troops landed, the battle of Alma was fought, and *The Times* began to report the shocking condition of the sick and wounded in Scutari.

All Britain was roused by the outspoken despatches of *The Times* correspondent. Now was Florence Nightingale's chance. Her letter offering her services in the East, and that of Sydney Herbert, the new war minister, asking her to go, crossed in the post. It should be noted that Herbert's letter gives a tentative but nevertheless clear scheme of how the whole thing might be arranged but ends, nevertheless, with a tactful but firm insistence that the consent of Mr. and Mrs. Nightingale must be obtained.

Before such a stupendous thing even Mrs. Nightingale was silent. With two trusted *aides-de-camp*, and thirty-eight nurses—the best that could be obtained—Florence Nightingale set sail for Constantinople on October 21, 1854.

The voyage was a triumphant pilgrimage for the nurses. For their chief it was a brief respite in which she might try to plan ahead, to organize, to sum up the characters of her staff—to prepare herself as best she might for what was to come.

She had no illusions—took no man's word. She had been told that she would find everything she required at her destination. At Marseilles she stopped long enough to buy large quantities of drugs, food, beds, clothing, dressings—all the immediate needs of a hospital, including several kitchen stoves. These she paid for with her own money.

No, she had no illusions! When one of her nurses fluttered up to her and said: "Oh, Miss Nightingale, when we land, don't let there be any red-tape delays, let us get to nursing the poor fellows."

"The strongest will be wanted at the washtub," was the reply.

But even before she was properly aware of the true awfulness of the conditions that awaited her, Florence Nightingale was under no misapprehension as to the immensity of the responsibility laid on her shoulders. The whole machinery of war was obsolete and out of date. There was no medical service to cope with the casualties—there was literally no organization. The Government at home was facing an immense scandal. In their desperation

they had called upon a woman to help them out of their plight.

Despite the clear orders of the Government at home, she knew that she would meet with jealousy, with prejudice, and that daily she would be called upon to deal with matters well outside her jurisdiction.

On November 4, she landed, just as news filtered through of the magnificent but useless Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava.

“Into the Valley of Death  
Rode the Six Hundred.”

“Bad news from Balaclava,” wrote Florence, as she waited to land. “You will hear the awful wreck of our poor cavalry, four hundred wounded, arriving at this moment for us to nurse . . .”

An hour or so later she was making her first round of the hospital. The hospital had been transformed from a barracks by the simple expedient of giving it a coat of whitewash. Underneath were open sewers, which alone made the air in the wards indescribably foul. The men lay often on the floor—there were not enough bedsteads—only a few inches apart, between coarse canvas sheets. The place was over-run with vermin of every description; the floors were rotten; the furniture and utensils for cleaning, cooking, etc., were conspicuous only by their absence.

The men were suffering not only from wounds, but from illnesses and fevers caused by lack of nourishment, exposure and exhaustion due to the terrible handling they had received. It was reported that they were more often dragged than carried to the hospital from the landing-stage—after a terrible journey by sea from the scene of battle. Lucky indeed were those who died in battle, swiftly and cleanly.

The maximum accommodation of the hospital was two thousand four hundred and thirty-four—the death rate was appalling, and there were always more clamouring for admission.

Against such conditions what could a handful of women do?

Yet the miracle happened. Out of a chaos so horrible, so hopeless that even the hardened soldiers were nauseated by the sights they had to endure, Florence Nightingale began to create order.

She provided decent food for men too sick and weak to stomach the eternal boiled meat that was the staple hospital ration. She even tried to ensure that the ordinary meat was boned so that one man should not receive a portion consisting entirely of bone or gristle—but that was too much for the red-tape upholders at Constantinople: “It would require a new regulation of the service to bone the meat” she was told.

Before the arrival of Miss Nightingale, only six shirts a month had been washed—now she organized laundry women from among the soldiers' wives, and the men began to enjoy the comforts of clean bodies and bed-linen.

It seems incredible that one woman could accomplish the herculean task that she did. She met, as she had anticipated, with suspicion, with contempt and with jealousy from the surgeons and medical authorities. From this, her official position, as laid down by the war office, could not save her. Gradually by tact, by firmness, and chiefly by demonstration of her own tremendous efficiency, she wore down their enmity, and in most cases earned not only their respect, but their loyal co-operation.

She fought or ignored red-tape and officialdom. It is believed that she even committed the heinous crime of seizing goods in the purveyor's warehouses before the board had "sat" on them—and that the purveyor himself, shocked into silence, could only stand by and watch rules and regulations flung to the wind by one terrible woman.

Her own staff of nurses were not always easy to manage. They were not all competent: some had to be sent home, there were religious differences, there was even trouble about the dress they must wear.

"I came out, ma'am, prepared to submit to everything, to be put upon in every way. But there are some things, ma'am, one can't submit to. There is the caps, ma'am, that suits one face, and some that suits another. And if I'd known, ma'am, about the caps, great as was my desire to nurse at Scutari, I wouldn't have come, ma'am."

However, in this instance the woman was reconciled to the despised caps, and stayed to prove herself an excellent nurse. The only time that Florence Nightingale vented her wrath on the head of Sidney Herbert, most loyal of supporters at home, was when he sent out a fresh batch of nurses without her approval, and their "disorderly behaviour" threatened to undo all the good she had done.

"I take rank in the Army as brigadier-general, because forty British females whom I have with me are more difficult to manage than four thousand men," she writes somewhat caustically; and the sympathies of every right-minded person are fully aroused on that point by another glimpse of some of the females she had to manage, for she writes later: "Above fourteen stone we will not have; the provision of bedsteads is not strong enough."

Yet these were the exceptions. On the whole, Florence Nightingale could not speak highly enough of the splendid work done by the women who accompanied her.

After six months at Scutari, the changes wrought in the general hospital were nothing short of miraculous. The sanitation and sewage of the hospital buildings were no longer a greater menace to the men than gun-fire and sword-wounds. The food was adequate, and decently cooked. Special diets were provided for those who needed them. Each man was adequately clothed, and provided with such necessities as towels, toothbrushes, combs, etc. The wards were clean; organization and orderliness made the task of physicians and surgeons far more easy.

The death rate had dropped from four hundred and twenty to twenty-two cases in a thousand. She had turned builder, even, and had on her own responsibility ordered repairs to some wards too dilapidated for use, but which were badly needed for a fresh batch of wounded men. She had appealed to the ambassador at Constantinople to authorise the expense, but as he disclaimed responsibility, she had paid out of her own pocket. But the wards were ready when the men arrived.

Those who worked with her during those six months marvelled at her physical endurance. All day she would sit in her office dealing with every possible enquiry; requisitions from physicians and surgeons, requests from nurses for diet sheets for special cases; innumerable letters; the personal affairs of nurses and staff—then she would go into the wards and personally attend the surgeons performing operations—standing for hours, or herself fight for the life of some man given up as hopeless.

To the medical staff, to the military authorities, to the blunderers at home, whose follies she could never brook patiently, to her own women nurses, she was just and capable, but on the whole a terrifying woman. It was the men themselves who had reason to know the Florence Nightingale of popular conception—"The Lady with the Lamp."

By night, attended sometimes by one orderly, more often alone, she would make the rounds of the wards—four miles of beds. She would stop here and there to exchange a quiet word or to give assistance to any who were restless or in pain. All those awake would turn their weary heads on their pillows to watch "The Lady with the Lamp" pass, and feel better for her very presence.

After that last round, Florence Nightingale would more often than not return to her office to write her official reports to Sydney



Herbert, reports written in haste, composed when she had a minute to spare, or was dropping with weariness. They spared nobody, and did not err on the side of presenting conditions as better than they were. Sidney Herbert thanked her for telling him "the terrible truth."

Before she had been six months in Scutari, she had instituted reading and recreation rooms for the convalescent soldiers, and had organized a scheme by which the men could send money home to be saved.

In the May of 1855, conditions in Scutari were so improved that she felt justified in leaving for an inspection of other hospitals in the Crimea.

On this journey she suffered extreme physical hardship. She spent days in the saddle or was driven over the bleak inhospitable hills. She bore cold and hunger, and met again with a renewal of jealousy from headquarters—in one case being locked out of a hospital she had been officially asked to take over.

In the end, endurance came to an end, she caught the Crimean fever, and for a while came "very near to death."

Even after she had, with difficulty, been pulled back from the brink of the grave, she refused to go back to England. She returned to Scutari and carried on with her work. Not until July, 1856, four months after the war had ended, did she leave.

The queen had sent a brooch, specially designed for <sup>1857</sup> and a warm letter expressing the hope that she would meet <sup>her</sup> and Nightingale on her return. The government offered her a warship to take her home. She refused, and travelled home accompanied only by her aunt and a queen's messenger. She eluded the enormous public reception prepared for her in London, and travelled on to her family's country house. They did not know of her movements and she walked up from the station.

So ended the great adventure. Actually it was but the beginning of Florence Nightingale's astonishing work. She lived to be ninety-one, and within a year or two of her death was a power to be reckoned with—the friend of reformers, the enemy of dilatory cabinet ministers. From an occupation of sluts and drunkards, she made nursing into the high calling it is today.

Yet to the world as a whole she is best remembered for her Crimean adventure, and the most familiar conception of her is in the Crimean War Memorial in Waterloo Place, London, where Sydney Herbert and "The Lady with the Lamp" stand for ever united in the great work for which they lived.





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